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The Impact of Relationships on School Culture From Perspectives of Faculty at a Philadelphia High School

Richman Mathis
rmath879@live.kutztown.edu

The Impact of Relationships on School Culture

From Perspectives of Faculty at a Philadelphia High School

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Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Andrew Miness, Committee Chair

Dr. Flannery O'Connor, Committee Member

Dr. Mark Wolfmeyer, Committee Member

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ABSTRACT

The Impact of Relationships on School Culture

From Perspectives of Faculty at a Philadelphia High School

By

Richman Mathis II

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, 2021

Directed by Dr. Andrew Miness

A school's culture is heavily influenced by the development of relationships between students and faculty. This study explores 13 faculty member stories to investigate what is in the culture at a private Philadelphia religious based high school that builds or hinders relationships. To inform this research investigation, evidence was gathered through a three step process: administering a survey, conducting semi-structured interviews, and the co-construction of narrative reflections. Faculty data collected shared moments revealing an understanding of the importance of healthy relationship building as an aspect in culture growth through empowering voices, autonomy, support, genuine love for one another, traditions and events, feeling of family, and belonging upholding the mission values as the school that works. Through the framework lens of critical race theory and concepts of critical consciousness supported by literature based themes of trust, identity, and community, faculty experiences were analyzed. This process unpacks the impact of positionality, recognizing systemic power structures hindering the growth needed to support elements of school culture development. Faculty stories revealed the value of establishing positive relationships while discovering social justice issues such as the lack of faculty agency and need for more amongst stakeholders, a racial/ethnicity disproportion within faculty and leadership personnel, faculty of color inclusivity, faculty retention, and challenges of Covid-19.

Analysis of findings leads to practices and research implications at the classroom, school, and organizational levels on importance of inclusion, support for faculty of color, promotion of community and relationship building, and empowerment of student and faculty voices in pedagogy and decision making.

Keywords: Critical Race Theory, critical consciousness, racial/ethnicity disproportion, systemic power structures, positionality, student-faculty relationships, school culture

Signature of Investigator: 

Date: 5-20-21

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This doctoral journey started as a crazy idea many years ago that was fueled by a desire not to be the best at anything or close to it. The fuel has and will continue as further growth to having a better understanding of how to be an agent of change. Change and voice for those who need it most. Fueled by a commitment to my own family to lead, serve, and make them proud of accomplishments while learning from the many mistakes and tribulations. This was never about Richman Mathis II. It was always about others.

I could not be more honored and grateful to have walked along this path for:

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Doing Big Things!

Dedication

To Mr. Rodriguez and Aunt Diane

Your Light is Our Life

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Introduction

Chapter Overview

In North Philadelphia, a right turn off Broad Street, when headed south towards Center City, is a private religious high school (PRHS for this study) that accepts all faiths. When driving into the parking lot, located on the horizon is the Septa Regional Rail overlooking the turf soccer field. After parking, the view is a five-story building with the left side brick, which once was a bicycle factory in the early 1900's. The right side displays rows of translucent windows, making up four floors of educational classrooms. Walking up to the back entrance of the school and through the foyer provides immediate access to a family room space awaiting. In this space is a grand piano with students keying and harmonizing melodies in the morning and after school hours. This space provides listeners with a calming and inviting feel to those entering. If intending to stay for a moment, the family room has multiple lounge chairs and tables as if you were seated in your own living room. The large TV displays images of current events and past highlights of joyous high school moments. This space was crafted to embrace a warm welcoming entrance to "the school that works". The championing motto is echoed by community members as "the school that works" because of the non-traditional schooling path taken to cultivate learning experiences.

This family room is one of many elements involved in the intentional purpose of developing a healthy school culture. Gerald (2006) explains school culture as an, "underground flow of feelings and folkways [wending] its way within schools' 'in the form of vision and values, beliefs and assumptions, rituals and ceremonies, history and stories, and physical

symbols" (p.7). PRHS underground flow of feelings is evident on the foyer walls, celebrating the core *values* of hope, faith, and love in trademark emblems, portraits, and images. This inviting space provides an immediate welcoming warmness, contributing to a sense of belonging. This vibrant underground flow of feelings allows for the manifestation of natural bonds in friendship and family at home.

If this private religious based high school is to be considered "the school that works", the school culture can be established with a clear vision sustained for growth from core values. Hemmings, Rhodes, and Stevens (2011) share the following:

> Values are the foundation of school organization cultures because they have a profound influence on whether school administrators and teachers emphasize individual autonomy over teamwork, entrenched tradition over innovation, or fierce competition over constructive collaboration. They are the moorings for how everyday life in offices, classrooms and corridors is actually lived. Values are vital for the success of all educational initiatives because they have a direct bearing on how school actors respond to school operations (Schein, 1991). (p.27)

If values are the foundation of a school organization's culture then stakeholders modeling these values might be essential to determining what success looks like. A vibrant building with spaces created to engage students, faculty, and staff into collaboration, also can create learning opportunities for one another. The sharing of the values and mission will influence the school culture. Then this institution can continue to grow to be "the school that works".

The *values* of PRHS (see Appendix I) have the opportunity to promote and drive healthy relationships leading to a vast array of learning experiences benefiting the stakeholders in the

school culture. Appendix I reveals the 11 values and statements of the school that works. An example of values being carried out promoting healthy relationships would be the department of Campus Ministry at PRHS which coordinates programming for student life. They foster the values of faith, hope, community, and love by planning and hosting retreats for students and faculty providing spaces where bonding and vulnerable conversations are had. In these spaces students and faculty reflect on experiences and moments which led them to where they are at today. They partner with our school community in developing faith and initiatives to serve others, allowing for faculty and students to carry our mission and values. Students have the space to live our mission and create the school culture of PRHS through the experience of all soul's day, service day, retreats, work-study jobs, community meetings, signing day, academic rigor, daily college counseling class, and Friday assemblies, are all examples of the various opportunities.

PRHS 11 pillars of value are love, trust, humility, hope, faith, affirmation, community, growth, gratitude, commitment, and resilience. The founding leadership team developed mottos through uniformed language such as "It's not but it can be", "Students are not the problem but the mission", "Hard Work, Good work, Our Work", "Our number one responsibility is to love our kids", "Build up, Build on, Build always" "Fail often but Fail Forward" and "Our work has never mattered more". The messaging in the sayings are derived from our 11 pillars of values. For example, the value of love is present in the motto "Our number one responsibility is to love our kids". This is evident when students, staff, and faculty build relationships and feel comfortable enough to tell each other, "I love you". Modeling to our young people the characteristics of allowing for vulnerability and putting others first are part of the belief system

and vision for PRHS. This sets the norm for the opportunity to develop relational trust, sense of community, valuing identity, caring for one another with the intentional belief that positive healthy relationships can develop.

Statement of Problem

Throughout the United States, learning institutions develop school culture from members of its school community and from the larger context in which schools operate. The folks known in the PRHS school community, extend from neighborhoods and city members interacting with the school; to students, families, faculty, and staff members who frequent the doors of the school that works. From the interactions between different cultures of the school community, experiences are shared, generating complicated perceptions of one's customs. A school's culture is considered "a complex web of stories, traditions, and rituals budding over time as teachers, students, parents and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments" (Deal & Peterson, 2016, p.37). Inside the walls of PRHS, faculty and students have different lived experiences which impact the school's culture. There lies a disparity in positionality between students, faculty, and staff with vast differences in lived experiences, race, and class. There tends to be a shared commonality of a desire for educational success as the core purpose of being a member of the PRHS school community as the mission statement to "nurture and challenge young people to recognize and realize their full potential. . . love others. . . serve the common good" reflects this (Mission Statement, 2021). If the shared vision of a desire for educational success is the core purpose of the school organization, PRHS should continue to think critically about the ways in which the school operates. To live out the true essence of this vision, we must seek to understand and change institutional practices that marginalize people of

color described by Ann A. Ferguson as “excluding African Americans in the economy and society through the rules and purportedly objective standards by individuals who may consider themselves racially unbiased” (2001, p.19). The practices of educating people of color can be viewed by some at the micro level as being the savior of black and brown children, hence the condescending narrative, children of color need saving. This institutional thinking is rooted in the oppressive form tied to the historic forms of colonialism (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017) by white settlers' dominance of institutions by controlling narratives to what is perceived as needed and right in societies. Through a lens of critical race theory, PRHS must challenge this savior mentality misconception because it could be an item in one’s own positionality at all levels of education fostering oppressive ideology. The shared vision outlook can be viewed as working together to become an agent of change in creating equitable educational experiences by empowering students. Once the two vastly different lived experiences are left untold or clash, the school culture can be influenced in a negative way.

According to Gerald (2006), research suggests that a strong, positive culture serves several beneficial functions, including the following:

> Fostering effort and productivity, improving collegial and collaborative activities that in turn promote better communication and problem solving, supporting successful change and improvement efforts, building commitment and helping students and teachers identify with the school, amplifying energy and motivation of staff members and students, and focusing attention and daily behavior on what is important and valued. (p.2)

From Gerald’s (2006) research and suggestion, without a commitment to collaborating, modeling effort, energy, and motivation, a school community can struggle to identify what is important and

valued. For example, there are 9th-12th grade level teams at PRHS. Each team meets one day per week on the same weekday for two hours. The meeting's objectives are to collaborate with faculty in developing supports to meet the needs of their grade level students. This time is sacred, although faculty share personal student information, the time is a chance to share best practices and to find ways to best support scholars. Students do not have the choice or opportunity to collaborate during the meetings. How beneficial and motivating would students be if they were empowered to join a grade level meeting? Specific meeting times would foster communication and problem solving which could spawn conversations about what is important and valued. This is just one example of a potential opportunity in achieving healthy relationships here at PRHS, if the belief is to strive in building a school culture which serves others by caring and loving one another. Through the mission, beliefs, and values at PRHS, the initiative of developing relationships within the school culture between faculty and students, displays this importance of inquiry.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research study is to explore the nature of student-faculty relationships at PRHS and the impact they have on the school culture.

From my own educational experience, I never had a meaningful or impactful relationship with any high school educator. Also, I did not know what a professional or college educated person of color looked or sounded like. I never met one or knew of any in my own family or community. This fostered my “why” and passion in the desire to be an agent of change in these elements which began with my own educational experience. As a young learner, I always felt excluded from the educational experience without knowing or being able to articulate “why”.

Being an African American, biracial male with predominantly white classmates, teachers, and administrators, it was as if I were an outcast. I always identified myself as a black male first, later learning that "passing" as white was impossible (Ogbu & Simons, 1998) due to the caste system structure for black Americans defining any offspring of blacks and white mating prohibited to assimilate into white society. This discovery had a profound impact on my own story and lived identity changing the way I saw the world around me because of how I was perceived.

Growing up in the City of Easton, believing there was a good amount of diversity, who would have thought race would have been ignored. But being considered the "black" kid by my white peers in honors classes and not "black" enough for my black peers, I found myself working twice as hard just to feel validated. Did I belong? Always having to prove intelligence & capability but at the same time feeling defeated, unworthy, and excluded as if I never belonged. Late in this journey, I learned the importance of having black educators since "teachers of color bring benefits into the classroom beyond content knowledge and pedagogy. As role models, parental figures, and advocates, they can build relationships with students of color that help those students feel connected to their schools" (Griffin & Tackie, 2016, p.1). I continuously wondered if I would have had people of color as educators would this have impacted my own identity and trust with schooling systems. This effected me in school because I felt as if my race did not exist - or worse, as if I did not exist. Not having any meaningful relationships with anyone from the school community is the main factor which led to isolation, low academic performance, and attendance issues as I persisted through high school. My own educational experience has a heavy impact on how I build relationships at PRHS.

At the school that works, I strive to tell our students I love them daily, provide meaningful support or just listen, to be the difference maker students deserve. The benefit of our scholars having an adult educator who shares the same school and cultural values as them, can shape students' outlook on what success looks like. This also might reaffirm our community values and the mission of "A college preparatory, Catholic school for students of all faiths, nurtures and challenges young people to recognize and realize their full potential as they learn to love others, grow in their faiths, and serve the common good" (Mission Statement, 2021).

Potential Significance

The potential value of this study can foster relationships as a forefront and as a critical component of improving school culture, further erasing racial disparities in education. By exploring the impact of student-faculty relationships at the school that works, this can add to current research on the positive factors benefiting school relationships and also what can deconstruct school culture. I chose critical race theory as the theoretical framework. I shared my educational experience because of the power in storytelling which is a vital element used to (Ladson-Billings, 1998) share the untold narratives of racialized oppression by learning from the experiences of people of color. My educational experience was one of feeling unequal and unimportant as the school community neglected race and identity issues. To foster change in the societal culture built through systemic oppression, engaging with critical consciousness offers faculty and students the ability to expose, interpret, and act on these experiences in systems. My educational experience did not offer this valuable opportunity. Without this tool and any significant relationships during my school aged academic years, I was ignored and excluded

from the educational process, falling behind, and labeled as a failure which people of color succumb to at a very high rate in our social institutions.

The impact stemming from negative unhealthy student-faculty relationships can have severe damage to a school's culture. The significance of instability in a school's culture, according to Deal and Peterson (2016), can be found directly from their interpretations:

> Negativity replaced optimism and the staff ethos took on a strikingly negative tone. Teachers berated students and lowered expectations. Dropout rates skyrocketed and academic performance dropped dramatically. Teachers often left if they could find other positions. Most did not want to come to work: absenteeism soared. (p.24)

The damage could be insurmountable, leading to the demise of an entire school's social, emotional, and academic duties. If a school community becomes unstable, falls apart, silos and division could emerge, and morale might vanish. Creating a positive school culture through healthy relationships can be a critical component in the influence of a school's well-being.

Research Questions

1. How does the school culture at the school that works promote (student-faculty) relationships?
2. How does one's positionality impact a vision of trust and strong community at the school that works?

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Chapter Overview

At the school that works our student body is composed of largely black and brown students who are labeled underserved and underprivileged by stakeholders. Our faculty body is predominantly white, middle class or higher, who might have vastly different lived experiences than our student body. PRHS serves a school community which is predominately black and brown students of color from across the Philadelphia region, in a new school building located in North Philadelphia. The two cultures of faculty and students intertwine at PRHS for the common goal of education. Each faculty and student culture encounters the other and is influenced by observing cultural practices. It is not just teachers facilitating learning, both faculty and students learn about distinct cultural beliefs from each other, shaping a school's culture. Learning is experienced from sharing ideas from one another, a two-way street which channels the potential for relationships to develop.

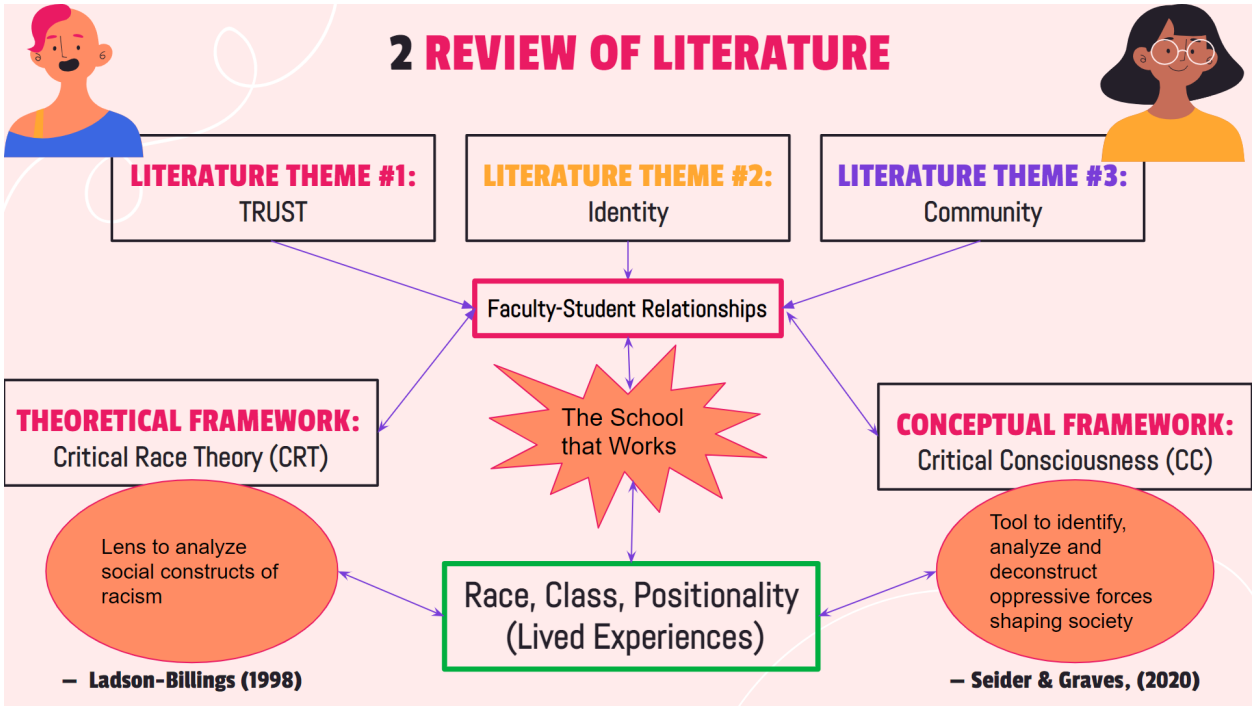
In this study, *critical race theory* as the theoretical framework, provides the lens to explore the dynamics of student-faculty relationships in the school culture at PRHS by examining lived experiences, race, and class.

To expand this study, *critical consciousness* as the conceptual framework, can discover the ability to identify, analyze, and act on the potential of oppressive systems in place at educational institutions. Critical race theory and critical consciousness as frameworks are important to this study which looks to shed light on PRHS educational practices and policies and possibly can be connected throughout the United States education system.

Figure 1 Illustrates a flow chart highlighting the continuity of the research literature based on three themes: trust, identity, and community through the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Critical race theory then was utilized as a lens to analyze systems constructed by race, class, and positionalities at the school that works to better understand student-faculty relationships.

Figure 1

Flow Chart of the Review of Literature



Note. Flow Chart created by the researcher.

Theoretical Framework

To explore the impact of relationships on school culture at the school that works, *Critical Race Theory* (CRT) was researched and selected as the theoretical framework. Ladson-Billings (1998) lays out the dynamics of CRT as a means to "name one's own reality with stories that

communicate the experiences and realities of the oppressed, the first step in understanding the complexities of racism and social justice. The voice of people of color is required for a deep understanding of the educational system". Since CRT in education is an "explanatory tool to describe the ways race and racism are permanent in U.S. society and consequently education", utilizing this lens to develop an understanding how different relationships of key stakeholders at PRHS impact school culture, offers the opportunity to evaluate relationships influenced by lived experiences, race, and class (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p.1). As Belle Hooks (1996) describes in the book titled, *Killing Rage: Ending Racism*, she elaborates:

> Placed in positions of authority in educational structures and on the job, white people could oversee and eradicate organized resistance. The new neo-colonial environment gave white folks even greater access and control over the African-American mind. Integrated educational structures were the locations where whites could best colonize the minds and imaginations of black folks. (p.108)

Decision making authority is conformed to a power dynamic structure led by a narrative controlled by white dominance in leadership positions at PRHS. This is why it is important to utilize CRT to rooted authority in educational structures that can provide a realization to the student-faculty relationships impact on school culture with the potential to dismantle power dynamics. CRT offers perspectives on "race and class as dominant factors in the subjugation of people of color" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.120). Exploring race and class in faculty positionalities through CRT provides a means to understanding the way a racialized and structured society caused a "culture of poverty" benefiting white identity vindicating systemic and institutionalized racism in education. Through the use of CRT, this study can explore

student-faculty relationships throughout the school community which can impact the school culture of PRHS.

In order to discover this, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) suggest we must begin with the understanding of Indian removal (and later Japanese Americans) from the land, to military conquest of the Mexicans, to the construction of Africans as property, the ability to define, possess, and own property has been a central feature of power in America. The power structure started early in America and is prevalent today, leading to major inequalities in our educational system (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). PRHS can gain a deeper understanding of major power inequalities in our educational system through the use of CRT. Critical race theory as a means to explore administration & faculty at PRHS with vastly different lived experiences, class, and racial makeup which influence the lives of students and families of color can lead to ways to promote healthy student-faculty relationships.

Since administration, faculty, and staff contribute their own positionality and lived experiences to the school culture the importance of trust emerges. Trust is essential to building relationships for the success of a school. Kaplan (2013) states trust as central to school improvement. To be effective and produce high levels of student learning, schools must be cooperative, cohesive, efficient, and well managed. Further Kaplan (2013) explains that shared decision making requires administrators to trust the teachers they invite to participate. Trust in teachers is key to the relationships that connect students and their families to schools. Bryk & Schneider (2004) expands on this asset that school professionals are more likely to trust & talk honestly amongst one another exposing vulnerability to grow professionally, make decisions collectively to generate school wide resources, reduce the sense of risk associated with change to

take on reform initiatives, and develop community relations with administrators and parents to "do what's best for students" fostering community (p.112).

To create a positive shared school culture at PRHS, relationships might be best conceived from the foundation and development of trust. With the emergence of the first theme, trust, I will explore the influence of trust in relationships and how this impacts school culture from the perspectives of faculty at PRHS.

Student-faculty relationships are impacted by explicit curriculum. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) examine the relevance of unequal power dynamics in education, comparing "property rights" to the same features as "intellectual rights" when comparing modern day explicit curriculum representing a form of "intellectual property". The learning of the inequities in power structure from the early manifestation of American to today has a distinct power dynamic in a school culture that Ladson-Billings (1995) argues must be deemed important to understand first. This structure of ownership of who controls the explicit curriculum turns a two-way street into a one-way. For example, educational policies (Brown, 2016) are created from historical and social context at the macro level as a complex artifact that is passed down to local levels and left for interpretation and implementation. From this micro level, school decision makers interpret policy with limitations and boundaries already in place through their own positionality to determine what, how, and when to implement policy action. The school's network passes down an academic model with a requirement of 3 years of social studies courses to graduate high school. The School District of Philadelphia requires its high school students to pass a course in African American History in order to graduate. This is important for schools to continually look at school policies through a CRT lens. This widens the two-way street described as educational policy

lacking discourse (Brown, 2016) by stakeholders which can reimagine policy to overcome a dominant narrative of what an explicit curriculum should be.

Dominant culture oversee institutions that create and design educational policy, high stakes assessments, textbooks, and curriculum (Yosso, 2006). Student and faculty narratives at PRHS could continue to be controlled by the dominant culture allowing for histories and stories to continue to be misinterpreted, ignored or devalued in these forms, stripping away at the identity of people of color, therefore impacting relationships. Milner (2017) professes that we have constructed schools as places that attempt to strip students of their identity, culture, and cultural practices (their language, values, customs, dress, preferences for reading and music). To shape the school culture at PRHS into a healthier way of life, embracing and celebrating the different racial makeups and identities might be of the utmost important factor in building strong relationships. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explains:

> A common belief is that if students engage in specific cultural behaviors, from the use of language to the practice of effective study habits and "appropriate" interactional styles, then they will have a higher propensity for school success. This line of thinking has gained much currency in the national mindset, particularly since the overwhelming majority of students who perform less well in school are poor, working class, English Language Learners, or of color. (p.145)

From this misconception of certain cultural behaviors deemed "appropriate", students of color are believed to have negative cultural practices which impact their relationships and academic experience allowing for the disposal of one's identity. Bennett (2019) explains white educators need to "expand worldviews related to whiteness and structural oppression by learning reflective

strategies to delve deeply into their own racial identity" as a support to decolonizing educational power structures and oppressive systems (p.8). This action could disparage this misconception and build relationships through recognizing people of color by including influential people, language, values, dress, customs, reading and music preference into the curriculum who may not otherwise be. By recognizing, understanding, and valuing the racial makeups and identity of school community members through the curriculum, can possibly aid in shifting the power structure in relationships, to a more equitable educational experience, ultimately shaping school culture at PRHS.

Educational institutions function in what Ferguson (2001) describes as a reflection of interest from dominant groups that reproduce inequities of our social, political, and economical systems. As occurrence from these inequities in education shape how identity formulates in the midst of oppressive structures described by Ferguson (2001) through hidden curriculum as:

> It proposes that the crucial element for creating and reproducing social inequalities is a "hidden curriculum" that includes such take-for-granted components of relations of authority and valorization of certain forms of linguistic and cultural expression. This hidden curriculum reflects the "cultural hegemony" of the dominant class and works to reinforce and reproduce that dominance by exacerbating and multiplying rather than diminishing or eliminating the "inequalities" children bring from home and neighborhood to school. (p.18)

Hidden curriculum formulates by suppressing the cultural identities of the people served and advancing a dominant culture agenda. For example, when faculty devalue certain music or literature when not allowing rap music to be listened to or played in the classroom, referring to

these certain categories of music as non educational or inappropriate. This sends a message of power: who gets to determine what is valuable in a culture and what is not. To counteract this narrative, faculty should embrace and seek to understand cultural differences (Yosso, 2006). For example, use music as a way of buy-in to develop relationships and as a path to learning by using lyrics to understand points of time and social context. From this relationship in power structure, racial makeup, and curriculum, the theme of identity emerges because of the potential contribution each school community member's identity has on the school culture at PRHS. With the emergence of the theme of identity, I will explore the influence of identity in relationships and how this impacts school culture from the perspectives of faculty at PRHS.

This leads to the emergence of our last theme, community. In the community of North Philadelphia sits the school building. The local community organizations such as the Thankful Baptist Church and Temple University Hospital, support and partner with PRHS. Also, some students from the local neighborhood attend PRHS but the majority of our school community members arrive from a range of areas in the Philadelphia region. There is a noticeable difference between the culture of the community and the dominant culture leading PRHS which could have an impact on the relationships and school culture of PRHS. Carter (2013) explains when some students enter schools in which the dominant cultural codes differ from theirs, a cultural mismatch results that may create difficulties in communication, dampen student engagement, and heighten disciplinary issues.

Most of the administration & faculty members are not from nor live in the local community but are tasked with networking and connecting with the local neighborhood families and establishments to create a school community. Additionally, with a majority of administration

& faculty who identify as white, sharing these characteristics: not residing in equivalent neighborhoods, having differences in family income & wealth, and not having the same lived experiences, admits a disparity in the social demographics of class. This community cultural mismatch might have an impact on the development of relationships and school culture at PRHS.

Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017) suggest the culture norms we are socialized to relate to the class we are born into, and this ensures that we will be most comfortable in and surround ourselves with people who share our class culture. The variations in the relationship of class between administration, faculty, students, and the community interconnect at PRHS can impact the school culture. Furthermore, Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017) explains class is about political power: the ability to influence policy, control capital, and shape institutional structures. The social construct of class can allow a hierarchy structure dominated by white ideologies to impact relationships within the school culture. As the theme of community emerges, to explore this relationship of class through community, we must further investigate the power structure already in place at PRHS. Sensoy & & DiAngelo (2017) state class refers to relative social rank in terms of income, wealth, status, and/or power. Class is about money and power, but it is also about culture. The power structure of class provides meaning and value to whiteness. As PRHS structures develop from classism structured as Ladson-Billings explains in the next quote, race existed even if white was the only race, it held power and value. Ladson -Billings (1995) identifies the power structure through CRT:

> Roediger (1991, p.3) asserts even in an all white town, race was never absent." However, more significant/problematic than the omnipresence of race is the notion that " whites reach the conclusion that their whiteness is meaningful" (Roediger, p. 6). It is because of

> the meaning and value imputed to whiteness that CRT becomes an important intellectual and social tool for deconstruction, reconstruction, and construction-deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power. (p.10)

This upholds the power structures implanting a school within a community that already existed with its own culture heightens Ladson-Billings suggestion. This relationship of power through classism has an impact on the school community and culture of the school. With the emergence of the theme, community, I will explore the influence of community in relationships and how this impacts school culture from the perspectives of faculty at PRHS.

Conceptual Framework

Through this lens of critical race theory a conceptual framework of *Critical Consciousness* (CC) can influence the development of positive relationships (see Appendix F). Appendix F captures the essence of a three way modality to critical consciousness. According to the text, *Schooling for Critical Consciousness, Engaging Black and Latinx Youth in Analyzing, Navigating, and Challenging Racial Injustice,* the authors Scott Seider and Darren Graves (2020) explain the term critical consciousness, coined by Brazilian philosopher-educator Paulo Freire, “to a person’s ability to recognize and analyze oppressive forces shaping society and to take action against these forces" (p.2). The development of critical consciousness can be a powerful tool at PRHS in transforming the relationships within our school community. Also there are some who might see critical consciousness as a tool that could destroy existing relationships. This is evident in the former Trump administration's denouncement of white privilege and critical race theory in federal racial sensitivity training. Former President Trump and his

administration cited these concepts as “divisive, anti-American, and perpetuates misguided views" identifying all federal racial sensitivity trainings that teach “United States is an inherently racist or evil country” or “that any race is inherently racist or evil” to halt this propaganda (Schwartz, 2020). This showcases the diversity of thought and cultural hegemony surrounding critical race theory and the acceptance of the structural nature of racism and prediction of whiteness on certain “appropriate” behaviors. This is why thinking critically with a social justice lens is the gateway to understand institutional power based on racialized systems of oppression in education. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues critical consciousness as a tool for students “to critique the cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (p.161). She further claims that “if school is about preparing students for active citizenship, what better citizenship tool than the ability to critically analyze society” (Ladson-Billings, p.162). Critical consciousness not only allows for the skill of identifying, analyzing, and taking action against oppressive systems, critical consciousness can also offer the opportunity for stakeholders in the school community to engage with one another with a deeper understanding and cultural awareness by critically analyzing society. This can lead to more meaningful relationships which can impact the school culture.

Faculty equipped with a level of critical consciousness awareness and teachers implementing critical consciousness within the curriculum have the opportunity to empower marginalized youth with this critical thinking tool while also taking the journey on with each other. Ladson-Billings (1995) recalled an example of this powerful tool used as “engaging teachers and students to think critically with the world and others as an expectation” (p.160). She recalled a moment from a study stating:

> Rather than merely bemoan the fact that their textbooks were out of date, several of the teachers in the study, in conjunction with their students, critiqued the knowledge represented in the textbooks, and the system of inequitable funding that allowed middle-class students to have newer texts. They wrote letters to the editor of the local newspaper to inform the community of the situation. The teachers also brought in articles and papers that rep-resented counter knowledge to help the students develop multiple perspectives on a variety of social and historical phenomena.
>
> (Ladson-Billings, 199, p.161)

This context demonstrates not only students are empowered to engage in relevant social action in their own communities to foster change with school textbooks but adults along this journey as well. The ability to be critically aware early on in life can offer individuals the capability of combating systems of oppression, violence, and other forms of dehumanization within society. This approach can have a positive outcome with the teacher-student power dynamic which has plagued schools who serve children of color. Seider and Graves (2020) expand on the growing research and found critical consciousness to be an important pre-indicator in having positive outcomes. Scholars expand on the importance of critical consciousness reporting “marginalized youth with high levels of critical consciousness are more likely to demonstrate resilience, mental health, self-esteem, academic achievement, high professional aspirations, and civic and political engagement” (Seider & Graves, 2020, p.3).

To conclude, students and faculty at PRHS entering bear their own lived experiences, race, and class affected by past and present structures of American society. These dynamics will continue to shape relationships and school culture in our school community. From the three

concepts of lived experiences, race, and class in critical race theory, three key themes emerged; trust, identity, and community. These three concepts and themes address the connection to critical race theory & critical consciousness supporting the further evaluation of the impact relationships have on school culture at PRHS. Furthermore, Delgado & Stefancic (2012) state critical race theorists have built on everyday experiences with perspective, viewpoint, and the power of stories and persuasion to come to a deeper understanding of how Ameicans see race. From this standpoint, being a person of color and a believer in the power of a story, I share my own story within the research. Through the remaining chapter, each section begins with a definition of each theme from literature then a narrative aligned with each of the three themes to contextualize a natural understanding. The definition is provided to enhance the reader's understanding of themes presented. From there on, the narrative is connected to literature from the storytelling perspective of CRT reinforcing the perspectives on relationships and school culture at PRHS. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a brief account of the literature as it specifically informs my research approach and sets the stage for the detailing of methods in the following chapter.

Emerging Literature Themes

Theme #1: Trust

Leslie Kaplan's (2013) version of trust in relationships:

> Trust is an essential dimension of human relationships. Trust may be understood as an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party—and place something they care about under the other person's protection or control—based on the

> confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open. (p.74)

This is described as the development of trust through honesty and transparency as a key component in the school culture at PRHS promoting relationships. Trust was described in different variations to provide the context to this theme. Bryk & Schneider (2004) describe trust as words, actions, intentions, and obligations maintained and understood in relationships which are essential in order for a successful school community to work well. The benefits of trust in the faculty interviews and narrative reflections provide a better understanding and in depth story of the student-faculty relationship impact on school culture.

If I were to describe trust and what the meaning of trust means to myself, the concept would share the stage with one word only; loyalty. When describing trust, loyalty rushes to the forefront. Trust to me is having confidence in someone to be reliable or someone who is always "down for whatever". When you rely on people you believe they care about your well-being and safety. They have the tendency to not put their own self-interest before yours. When you trust others, you are ensuring there is the same or more devoted meaning in your relationship. However, by trusting others you expose yourself to vulnerabilities that could impact your ability to trust and have healthy relationships, once that trust is broken. This is part of my own culture of being an African American which was instilled through my own lived experiences, race, and class. The interpretation of trust will vary from different variations of these factors in a person's shared culture shaping the relationships we forge.

When faculty and students arrive at PRHS packed with their lived experiences, race, and class, this infuses school culture. As Carter (2013) explains when students' cultural backgrounds

are dissimilar to the backgrounds of their teachers and principals, the disadvantages experienced by those students are due to educators' lack of familiarity with their social backgrounds, which in turn hinders those educators' capacity to engage with the students effectively (p.143). Families send their kids to PRHS trusting an administration and faculty of adults with their most precious gifts, for the reason of education as a pathway to a successful life. They are sending their children to a school dominated by administration and faculty who do not look or sound like them, constrained (Ogbu & Simons, 1998) to trust this educational system because families want an affordable and quality private education for their young teens. Once students are here, they are in a vulnerable place within the school cultural dynamics. They could opt in or out of the cultural norms created depending on if they trust and feel safe in this school setting. Carter (2013) described, it becomes that much harder for educators to engage with students when they lack the understanding or familiarity of the people they serve. This can make trust a key element in shaping a relationship when students are vulnerable to a school setting. In order to bridge the relational and cultural learning between educators and students to continue to advance the school culture at PRHS to a shared positive way of life, developing a trusting relationship might be imperative.

I have come to realize through my own experiences, trust and loyalty go together. Being a firm believer in trusting first has had its moments. I pledge to trust first but validate, to create meaningful relationships. By trusting others first, it puts my vulnerabilities at risk which can lead to different uncomfortable emotions. As stated by Kaplan, "when we trust, we make ourselves vulnerable to another person who we expect to voluntarily accept the implied moral duty—or ethically justifiable behavior—to recognize and protect our rights and interests, so we can better

work together in a common endeavor. Without vulnerability, there is no need for trust" (2013, p.74). Righteously so, the benefits of being vulnerable allows others to witness your willingness to open up, grow, and make connections which can start new beginnings. When I start to build and develop relationships in the classroom, I come to realize that relationships usually start with trust. By starting with trust, this can mean acknowledging our own positionalities developed by our race, class, and experiences and understanding this could have an impact on the way we foster relationships in classroom communities. Bennett (2019) shared this same approach in a study on relational trust and teacher positionalities conforming to race and oppression, "when a white teacher enters her classroom without critically reflecting on topics of race and oppression, movement toward understanding the complexities and impact of race on individuals might still be possible through the development of relational trust, which could also influence teaching practices with students" (p.9). This for me has created enormous buy-in within classrooms from students by seeking to understand one's identity and positionality by reflecting on topics of race and oppression to develop relational trust. Of course, not every student trusts or buys-in but students who become loyal have encouraged others to be able to trust that teachers have their best interest.

In a study on racializing the raceless norm in predominantly black schools, Bell (2019) shared this conclusion:

> It is largely taken for granted that whiteness, as an organizing principle, is meaningless to whites, and that white people rarely, if ever, think about their own race. It is also widely posited that, due to the context of a white dominated society – one in which whites enjoy political, cultural, and economic hegemony – the invisibility of whiteness leads to the

> normalization of whiteness, meaning that whiteness is socially constructed as normal or the default American. Taken together, these interlocking processes present a false view of the social world, skewing perception about the myriad ways that 26 whiteness shapes society, as well as the lives of individual white people. (Bell, 2019, p.25)

Bell's theory suggests a white dominated society is cultivated as the norm for American society leading to misconceptions led by whiteness shaping viewpoints of others. If the dominant group sees their own race as non-existent and what is normal while other races are coined as a subculture of whiteness, how can there be a unified trust in social institutions? Educators that acknowledge whiteness and seek to dispel structures that normalize whiteness by building trusting relationships can advance equitable social outcomes. This can look like educators in the classroom sharing their own stories of how they identify while learning from the stories of the community. Leadership can create spaces and structures in the school that fosters a culture where community members can have discussions and dialogue around socially constructed concepts like racism, whiteness, and oppressive power structures at play. When trust is developed in a community then vulnerable and uncomfortable conversations are able to take place. When trust breaks down or stories go untold (Bell, 2019) a misunderstanding of one's identity can be narrated by a hegemony society, further normalizing whiteness.

School stakeholders taking initiative to develop trust at PRHS can be an essential component to building relationships within a school culture. Leadership such as in the principal at PRHS, might be a vital factor of building trusting relationships throughout the school community. This can be an intentional practice facilitated by the principal through consistent actions and words. As the leadership at PRHS creates a school vision, follows up with a plan of

action, and stakeholders witness results and growth, trust is nurtured and emerges. Stakeholders might witness these behaviors of leadership which can affirm personal integrity and respect, developing trust in relationships in the school community impacting the school culture of the school.

Through the connected relationships, relational trust has the possibility to develop. Bryk & Schneider (2004) describe relational trust as:

> As individuals interact with one another around the work of schooling, they are constantly discerning the intentions embedded in the actions of others. They consider how others' efforts advance their own interests or impinge on their own self-esteem. They ask whether others' behavior reflects appropriately on their moral obligations to educate children well. These discernments take into account the history of previous interactions. In the absence of prior contact, participants may rely on the general reputation of the other and also on commonalities of race, gender, age, religion, or upbringing. These discernments tend to organize around four specific considerations: respect, personal regard, competence in core role responsibilities, and personal integrity. (p.166)

For this study, collecting data on if the presence of relational trust in relationships exists at PRHS can be a key indicator on the impact of school culture. Relational trust can diminish (Bryk & Schneider, 2004) when individuals perceive that others are not behaving in ways that can be understood as consistent with their expectations about the others' role obligations. This can lead to a serious deficiency in respect, competence, personal regard for others, integrity can damage a schools overall trust. Trust in relationships can also potentially be a link to developing higher levels of critical consciousness in student-faculty relationships. Sieder & Graves (2020)

explained that Paulo Friere theorized that when people from oppressed groups can engage in *social analysis*, the dominant narratives that hide or perpetuate oppression "lose credibility" (p.4). By providing opportunities for trust in student-faculty relationships, faculty then can engage with the first step of critical consciousness, social analysis, to identify racist power structures and systems of oppression. The school community can provide opportunities for trust to develop by putting students first with having a voice in decision making that impacts their narrative and by creating safe spaces in the classroom and throughout the school.

From my experience as an educator, fostering and building trusting relationships has proved to have a positive impact on student success. When I have "checked-in" with students, by first listening and validating student concerns, it allows the student and myself to build an equitable respect for one another. If a student wants to discuss a personal matter, listening without judgement would allow trust and honesty to develop. Students will begin to understand, with the building of empathy and sympathy, that an adult presence is interested in their well-being. As an educator, we do not have all the answers, but by providing a space and time for students to express concerns can foster the growth of trustworthy and healthy relationships. Also, just as important, is providing a space to celebrate students. Every Monday, to start class, we have a check-in with students being interviewed about their weekend, accolades, events, or a space for peer affirmation.

Theme #2: Identity

Ogbu & Simons describe identity as:

> A response to school identity being maintained, it is forced upon the culture thus developing a minority collective identity based upon opposition to white American identity. (1998, p.175)

My own natural definition of identity is who you believe you are, what the world believes you are, and what impacts this belief. Ogbu & Simons (1998) argue that your identity in American is influenced by opposition to white American identity thus creating a minority identity. For example, my parents had an impact on my identity beginning with my name, Richman Mathis II, which was "different" than other common names. The name, Richman Mathis II, represents who I am. I was named after my father, who was the recipient of the same name from his grandfather. He was raised to be respectful and proud of his name as it represents the strength of his grandfather and his entire family. Not only was my father proud of his name, his upbringing encouraged him to make sure it was spelled and read correctly at all times. At any moment if it was not, would immediately destroy any trust in the beginning of a relationship, then he would ensure the correction was made with assertive confidence. According to my father, by doing this, the identity stripped away from us and our ancestors would be restored every time it was corrected. I continue the same respect and pride of my name, correcting all when necessary to restore the power balance bringing great peace to myself, my father, and family. This is one of many different cultural aspects stemming from my identity & relationship with my inner circle (parents) impacting how I relate and develop relationships with the PRHS school community.

One of the great moments of my life was M.Ed. graduation ceremony at DeSales University. My entire family was there including my father. When it was my turn to walk across the stage proudly, the moment I had dreamed of, the announcer pronounced my name as

"Richard Mathis II". This was a common theme through my own experience with schooling, slowly chipping away at my identity. At PRHS, with so many different identities and cultural differences, how might our school community witness and embrace the differences to manifest positive relationships which can nurture the school culture.

This is just one of the various examples of my identity and how I would contextualize what identity means to me. My belief is through identity one can begin to relate to the world around us and identify with others not only who share similar identifications but with those who do not. The hope is to learn to understand not only who people are but how they identify and what impacts their identity, to transform how we understand ourselves and others in this world.

Building trust is crucial to the cultural competence impact on furthering student-faculty relationships. Ladson-Billings (1995) describes cultural competence as, "the attempt to locate the problem of discontinuity between what students experience at home and what they experience at school in interactions of teachers and students". If faculty are neglecting the need to develop trusting relationships through encouraging one another to understand student and faculty home experiences and culture backgrounds, how can trust fully form? Ladson-Billings (1995) further explains that African-American students are seen in schools as a place where they cannot be themselves. Ladson-Billings (1995) continues stating African-American students can be reprimanded for wearing clothing or "posturing" a certain way as being perceived as negative behaviors rather than specific concerns. The Dean's Office at PRHS has a tremendous amount of influence on building the school culture to reject these misconceptions by forming trust in the relationships by understanding the need for cultural competence. More importantly the office promotes a positive approach to interacting amongst faculty and students at PRHS thus

establishing the school culture being present in the foyer, family room, and hallways of the school. The Dean's Office at PRHS has a tremendous amount of influence on building the school culture to reject these misconceptions by forming trust in the relationships by understanding the need for cultural competence.

According to Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design,* he describes the development of identity through a ecological system relationship:

> First, the developing person is viewed not merely as a tabula rasa on which the environment makes its impact, but as a growing, dynamic entity that progressively moves into and restructures the milieu in which it resides. Second, since the environment also exerts its influence, requiring a process of mutual accommodation, the interaction between person and environment is viewed as two-directional, that is, characterized by *reciprocity*. Third, the environment defined as relevant to developmental processes is not limited to a single, immediate setting but is extended to incorporate interconnections between such settings, as well as to external influences emanating from the larger surroundings. This extended conception of the environment is considerably broader and more differentiated than that found in psychology in general and in developmental psychology in particular. The ecological environment is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next. These structures are referred to as the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems. (p.255)

Bronfenbrenner (1979) explores the various systems from the micro to macro levels that impact identity development. This supports my own understanding of how identity is formed in human

development. I define identity as being influenced by your own perspective of one's self, the people closest to you (family or peers) and then by outside influencers. We develop identity first through our inner circle or described by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as the microsystem. If identity is developed first through our inner circles then influenced by outer circles, PRHS being an outside influence, would have a major impact on the relationships and school culture of those who enter PRHS.

At PRHS, the racial disparity has an impact on the school community. The interactions amongst students and faculty are influenced by individual identity therefore shaping the school culture. Ladson-Billings (2000) explains the need for educators to understand and value student identity, culture, communication, and other members of their cultural group since schools are seen as institutions where students of color cannot fully be themselves. PRHS student body is entirely people of color with the majority identifying as black while faculty and leadership positions are abundantly held by whites. The gap with underrepresentation of people of color in faculty and leadership positions can miss an opening to crucially nurture identity with student-faculty relationships as there is less opportunity. According to Belle Hooks (2003) in the book titled *We are Cool Black Men: Black Men and Masculinity,* she writes:

> Black male "cool" was defined by the ways in which black men confronted the hardships of life without allowing their spirits to be ravaged. They took the pain of it and used it alchemically to turn the pain into gold. That burning process required high heat. Black male cool was defined by the ability to withstand the heat and remain centered. It was defined by black male willingness to confront reality, to face the truth, and bear it not by adopting a false pose of cool while feeding on fantasy; not by black male denial or by assuming a "poor

> me" victim identity. It was defined by individual black males daring to self-define rather than be defined by others. Using their imaginations to transcend all the forms of oppression that would keep them from celebrating life, individual black males have created a context where they can be self-defining and transform a world beyond themselves. (p.138)

If you are a male student identifying as black, how is black identity nourished and developed if the school lacks adequate representation. There would be minimal interconnectedness with adults who represent a similar story. Black male students could continue to resort to self-defining by changing themselves. Having more representation of educators of color also improves academic outcomes. Studies show that "having just one black teacher not only lowers black students' high school dropout rates and increases their desire to go to college, but also can make them more likely to enroll in college" (Aina, 2019, n.p.).

Identity might have an effect on explicit and null curriculum; specifically, what is or is not being taught and how learning is facilitated. The explicit curriculum concerns learning opportunities that are overtly taught and stated or printed in documents typically drawn from standards, policies, and related guidelines (Milner, 2017). Milner (2017) also describes how teachers are mostly taught to consider the "formal," explicit curriculum of the classroom. At the same time, schools increasingly tend to be places where many students do not want to be (Ladson-Billings, 1998)—and yet, rather than changing, schools expect students to change. As proposed by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998) critical race theory sees the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script. This master scripting means stories of African Americans are muted and erased when they challenge dominant culture authority and power (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Majority of

curriculum, standards, policies, and related guidelines are constructed by a dominating structured white society enforced by the majority. This can allow for discourse, uninterestedness, disengagement, and lack of desire to be part of a school community.

Milner (2017) describes the value of systemic, institutional shifts as important to build the kind of citizenry that allows us to take forward steps toward equity. Students are taught by predominantly white teachers what is scripted and deemed important by policy makers, administrators, and teachers. Scripted lessons from textbooks and curriculum can miss out on current opportunities of essential real-world experiences that impact the daily life of students of color. Milner (2017) explains students are learning something based on the absence of certain experiences, interactions, and discourses in the classroom referred to as the null curriculum, which students do not have the opportunity to learn. Systematically, students of color are too often rehearsed mandated curriculum that does not meet the importance of cultural relevance.

Understanding to be an agent of change through critical action, the concept of political agency may offer insight to how identity can impact student-faculty relationships in the school culture. Seider & Graves (2020) refer to the second component of critical consciousness, *political agency*, as the belief that one has the capacity to effect social or political change (p.4). Having the ability to believe in change could be determined through your identity and confidence in if you can effect change. They continue to describe political agency as "a crucial component of critical consciousness because it can transform an individual's recognition of oppression and injustice into a commitment to oppose these forces" (Seider & Graves, 2020, p.5). For an individual to have the ability to recognize and believe they can reshape social or political systems of oppression and injustices, first they should understand their own identity. Providing

students and faculty within the school community opportunities to learn one's name & story, learn about each other, explore one's own identity & culture, and space for non-academic learning, can impact the relationships in the school culture.

Theme #3: Community

Peter Block describes community as:

> The essential challenge to transform the isolation and self-interest with our communities into connectedness and caring for the whole. We begin by shifting our attention from the problems of community to the possibility of community. (2018, p.1)

Describing what community means to me leads to my own neighborhood connectedness to Easton, Pa. When I think of community, I think of a shared culture and understanding amongst people within a network that develops overtime. In the encyclopedia book titled, *Encyclopedia of Community: From the Village to the Virtual World Community Building,* the author Xavier de Souza Briggs (2003) defines community building as:

> Community building has come to refer to a variety of intentional efforts to organize and strengthen social connections or to build common values and norms that promote collective goals (or both)—that is, to build more community (an interim goal) as a way of achieving some set of desired outcomes (e.g., safer neighborhoods, healthier children and families, better preserved cultural traditions, more profitable businesses, and so forth). (p.9)

From Souza Briggs' explanation, my interpretation of community looks like this. A parent sitting on the porch stoop, looking out for the kids playing kickball in the street was a common community theme on summer nights. The parent was trusted with protecting the local children playing with each other, from any dangers that would present itself. Other parents in the

community shared the same understanding and culture of the importance of safety with the community children. I also recall the neighbors who lived in silos, choosing to not be part of such a community even when embraced. Another shared cultural value of our community way of life was supporting each other when families faced adversity. From distraught families struggling with substance abuse, to family financial struggles and loss of employment, to single or divorced parents, we would shift from the problem to possibilities as Peter Block described. A neighborhood culture through trust, embracing identity, and building community, was established.

The kids who came from other communities and family members who came to visit, would bring their own identities, cultures, and at times unsettling beliefs. The families in the community would often consume these cultures and absorb their latest music, slang, clothing fashions, or favorite sports team & athletes. This would transcend the perception of others in different communities by being exposed to various cultural experiences.

Another example of what community looks like from my neighborhood is summer block chase and the parties that would create bonds with neighbors. A strong sense of belonging developed, tying me to my community, and what I learned on “11th Street”. The love and loyalty to my friends, the caring, keeping each other safe by “looking out”, and respecting others especially adults, all came from my community neighborhood. My own devotion and bond to this community was so significant to me that I got a “11th Street” tattoo, a reminder to never forget the influence of my neighborhood. This tattoo always represents the meaningful relationships I still cherish today, starting from a neighborhood bond, born into a family of lifelong friends from the “11th Street” community. Community is described by Schaps (2003) as

basic fundamental needs such as a sense of safety, belogning, autonomy, connectedness, and competence as vital to shape human development and craft healthy relationships. A connectedness is fostered as a sense of belonging was developed in this community. When school communities enfold, stakeholders can be challenged with building community relationships while embedding the community culture within the school. This difference in lived experiences, race, and class amongst the faculty & staff and community can have an impact on the school culture.

Through community an element of a sense of belonging can become a key essential component of school culture by allowing students to form and sustain meaningful relationships. From a study conducted by Bronfenbrenner (1979), developing a belongingness hypothesis "that human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" implies to the human element of a need to be connected with human interaction. Implementing this rationale that human beings have an instinctive drive in developing meaningful relationships at the very least provides context to the development of community within a school. Human beings desire to belong and establish relationships. Furthering the growth of a sense of belonging by relationship building in community, Bronfenbrenner (1979) describes the human development from daily interactions with significant people like parents, peers, and teachers called the microsystem within a macrosystem of societal economic conditions and norms. Community can be developed through the navigation and understanding of these two systems in developing relationships within a school culture.

If human beings desire to belong then in a microsystem such as a school community students must then have the same desire, to be connected to each other and the school. As described by Flitcroft & Kelly (2016), school belonging can be defined as when students "feel close to, a part of and happy at school; feel that teachers care about students and treat them fairly; get along with teachers and other students and feel safe at school. (Libbey 2007, p.52)" (p.301). Fostering a sense of belonging through community so students can feel close, happy, or cared about at school can be developed by leadership at PRHS. With differences amongst stakeholders in lived experiences, race, and class, leadership has the opportunity to engage in establishing a sense of belonging fostering connectedness to the school community and culture. Community influences a sense of belonging which could have an impact on the relationships of a school culture at PRHS.

With distinct cultures within the school community can lead to a cultural mismatch and a lack of valuing community. Learning to include cultural identity and competence through critical consciousness in a school community might contribute to forming healthy relationships. Briscoe, Khalifa, & Okilwa (2017) best illustrate the importance of forming relationships through learning cultural competence not just by hiring the right people but going beyond this scope with discussions and professional development about race, racism, and culturally responsive pedagogy. The School to Prison Pipeline: The Role of Culture and Discipline in School, suggests:

> Hiring right is not enough, teachers do not acquire cultural competence by accident; the school principal is obligated to provide relevant professional development to include topics on race and racism, culturally responsive pedagogy, etc. (Khalifa, 2011). Also,

> hiring efforts should seek to increase the ethnic and gender diversity of the teaching force. To the extent possible, the teaching force should reflect the student population that is increasingly becoming a minority majority. Nationally, the teaching force is predominantly White females. Advocates of "student's own-race teacher-pairing" point to the role model effect and the evidence that teacher's perceptions have an effect on student outcomes (Dee, 2004). (Briscoe, Khalifa, & Okilwa, 2017, p.5)

This highlights the importance of the student population's gender and ethnic diversity being represented in the faculty within the school community. Who we hire to be a member of the teaching and learning community can have an impact on the relationships of the school culture further shaping the narratives of the young people we serve.

Community amongst all stakeholders is a PRHS vision that fosters collaboration and engagement between the educational system, students, families, faculty, staff, leadership, board members, volunteers, job partners, board members, and area community members. But to ever get to this level of true equitable collaboration Ishimaru (2020) suggests "both families and systems of oppression in education must lean into the complexities and discomfort of these twin dynamics to learn our way toward policies and practices of educational justice" (p.37). Shifting the community culture "from parent to family engagement by establishing co-designers of practices and policies fosters more equitable collaborations between families, communities, and educational systems" (Ishimaru, 2020, p.141). At PRHS, this form of collaboration can shift power dynamics by including community members impacted by decisions or events that affect them. By sharing expectations, co-designing, and collaborating to inform decisions for best practices, a cultivation of culture can develop for a rich school community culture.

Understanding critical consciousness and the concept of social action could present a perspective to how community can impact student-faculty relationships in the school culture. Seider & Graves (2020) refer to the third component of critical consciousness, *social action*, to engaging in events or activities that confront oppressive forces and structures, and the unequal conditions they perpetuate (p.5). This can be done collectively in a school community like PRHS as a collaborative approach to navigate and challenge oppressive forces whether through hiring practices or school policy. Additionally, according to Sieder & Graves, "Paulo Friere characterized engagement in such social action as the ultimate goal of critical consciousness (2020, p.5). To achieve this goal of social action initiation, student-faculty relationships should thrive in a school community. Opportunities in a community could start by forming responsive & reflective practices, developing connectedness with teachers of color to create comfortable spaces which encourage interactions, and support a sense of belonging without working in silos which can impact the relationships in the school culture.

To conclude, by examining the racial disparity at PRHS through the lens of critical race theory one can gain the opportunity of unpacking how trust, identity, and community relationships influence school culture. To capture this story, critical consciousness as a means to understand the ability to identify, analyze, and act on the potential of oppressive systems in place at PRHS can further investigate the impact of relationships on school culture. We will examine the research methods of chapter three, the themes of trust, identity, and community through elements of CRT and critical consciousness, lived experiences, race, and class as instruments to interpret data. Utilizing critical race theory and critical consciousness as frameworks to examine

tools needed to explore the relationships amongst one another at PRHS, is a method to the possibility of understanding how to transform practices and policies.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Chapter Overview

This action research study is developed through the context of qualitative action research and participatory design and analyzed by the frameworks of critical race theory and critical consciousness lenses. Given (2016) states, “Qualitative research is a human-focused approach to research design, which aims to delve deeply into people’s experiences, perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs" (p.2). Facilitating a qualitative research study at PRHS enables school community members an opportunity to experience a study using their own narratives and stories, thus potentially enhancing the school culture. To support this qualitative study, a participatory approach in the methods and data analyze process informed data driven decision making to align the research. Morrison & Pole (2003) state “The portrayal of an insider’s perspective, in which the meaning of the social action for the actors themselves is paramount and takes precedence over, but does not ignore, that of the researcher” (p.4). Participatory action provides this study a way to purposely utilize voices needed to further analyze detailed data about the school communities’ behaviors and experiences in social interactions. The narratives from the faculty perspectives provide direct evidence of what is happening and what constitutes the school culture at PRHS which directly impacts the student-faculty relationships. Listening to their stories provides valuable context to what is happening in the hallways and spaces. In other words, these two lenses will help each other in supporting school community members to tell their stories, engage with the understanding of their interactions, and work together to create narratives in solving school community puzzles.

The objective of the study is to investigate how relationships impact the values, beliefs, and attitudes of PRHS. In order to research and study the impact of relationships on this phenomena at PRHS, the researcher triangulated data through the collection instruments of a google survey, individual interview, and narrative reflection methods. Triangulation is one method by which the researcher analyzes data and then presents the results to others to understand the experience of a common phenomenon (P. Fusch et al, 2018). From the triangulation, the emerging themes emerged through the organizational, management, review of the literature, and engagement with the data when employing the coding mechanics. Having multiple data sets boost the results and add more value in advocating for social change and combating bias in the qualitative research study. Each of the three collection methods are administered by the researcher to 13 recruited faculty participants from the academic, deans, and administration departments. The purposeful selection of these specific departments offers an essential exploratory view related to how PRHS stakeholders make sense of relationships' impact on school culture.

The first step I conducted in this study was administering a *Google Survey* (see Appendix A) to all faculty members. Appendix A illustrates the demographic questions administered to faculty in the survey. This step allowed the researcher to gather responses by scaling the entire faculty collectively, in a timely manner, and gather vital initial data to benefit the understanding of relationships amongst students and faculty at PRHS. Also, this data was used to understand relationships between similarities and differences in the departments. The intended purpose of this inquiry is to potentially uncover how student-faculty relationships in creating a school culture.

Faculty members received a formal email invitation to complete the google survey. The survey included the option to volunteer as a participant, a description of confidentiality, purpose, and the future implications of this study. The introduction of the google survey allowed for the opportunity to collect demographic responses, requesting the participant to select their title, department, age, identification, ethnicity, race, years of experience, and education levels. Lastly, structured questions are provided to gauge lived experiences of participants to determine relational influences on the school culture and the extent of trust, identity, and community existing in the relationships of PRHS. From the data gathered by the google survey, the researcher recruited a max of six faculty members from each of these three departments; academic, deans, and administration. As the sole researcher, a threshold of up to six faculty per department affords adequate time to employ instruments, data collection, and data analysis for the studies allocated time. Also, participants were selected based on different diversity demographics including identification, ethnicity, and race, to provide a broader range of narratives.

The second step in the data collection process was executing the *Semi-Structured Interviews* (see Appendix B*)* to all three departments and participants involved. Each interview was facilitated solely by the researcher and formally scheduled by email, an individual in-person interview with each participant. Appendix B showcases each of the six interview questions conducted in each interview. Before the interview started, the researcher shared a google document with the participant of the six structured questions. The participant had the option to have five minutes to read over the handout, write responses to questions, or note any initial thoughts. The reason for requesting participants take five minutes with the google document of

interview questions was to allow the participant time to think and reflect prior to asking the same interview questions. This provided the participant the opportunity to gather initial ideas before expanding on their thoughts with richer responses during the interview questioning process. Then, the researcher asked all six interview questions and conducted an audio/visual recording of each interview using Zoom. During this time I manually recorded notes on key points to each interview question as a way to gather initial patterns. The interview questions were structured to enable faculty to talk about their experiences and to build their own emic categories for their stories (Anderson et al., 2007). The design of the questions were strategically formulated based on the themes of trust, identity, and community derived from the literature. As the literature explains, trust, identity, and community can all have an impact on the development of positive and healthy relationships in a school community.

Late in the data collection process, I discovered a valuable asset of collecting data from the *Instructional Leadership Team* (ILT) would provide added validity further enhancing the study. Additionally, a formal interview was conducted in January 2021 to gather evidence. To support this study two topics were discussed by the 3 ILT participants: **1)** Why they thought the instructional framework was an important way to approach coaching. **2)** What their perspectives were on prioritizing Tier 1 - building relationships and student centered learning atop the framework. From this interview the data gathered was analyzed through the same coding process as the other pockets of data.

The third step aided in the *Narrative Reflection* (see Appendix C) process. Appendix C details the writing prompt administered to each of the 13 participants. All participants from the three departments (academics, deans, and administration) were formally emailed a narrative

reflection document with a writing prompt. A narrative reflection as a data collection resource is being utilized as a tool to extract the positionality and lived experiences of faculty at PRHS. Narrative reflection is described by Delgado (2012) as the art of storytelling as "stories that are engaging which can help us understand what life is like for others and invite the reader into a new unfamiliar world" (p.48). By using narrative reflection, the research has the potential to capture stories from lived experiences at PRHS. As faculty members reflect on their lived experience, a narrative reflection can provide an extensive opportunity to learn from experience as explained by Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985).

> Reflection is an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it. It is this working with experience that is important in learning. The capacity to reflect is developed to different stages in different people and it may be this ability which characterizes those who learn effectively from experience. (p.19)

Using narrative reflection as a data collection tool further captures the true stories of faculty at PRHS and potentially seize moments of relationships in the community.

The narrative reflection has a brief overview of the study and purpose of participants providing responses that reflect on their own stories and practices. The participants are asked to write as much as they feel is necessary to capture their voice. The narrative reflection prompt is purposely co-constructed to have each participant reflect on their experiences with student relationships, trust, and the school community at PRHS. There is a possibility that the method of narrative reflection will provide deeper insight to each participant's identity and positionality as it relates to each individual's own story and experiences at PRHS.

Before data was gathered, the organization process began with the creation of a formal *Codebook* (see Appendix H) constructed in a Google Document. Appendix H illustrates an example of the coding process after a participant interview. Each participant had their individualized codebook to store data separate from other participants. The layout design consisted of six deductive codes: Building Relationships, Student-Centered Learning, Classroom Leadership, Teaching for Equity, Growth Mindset, Team and Community along with their descriptions, room for researcher notes, six interview questions and two narrative reflection prompts in a table with space to import data and record cycle 1 & 2 codes. The six deductive codes were intentionally used and extracted from the *Instructional Coaching Framework (ICF)*, (see Appendix G) to explore commonalities between faculty perspectives and the ICF framework. Appendix G highlights the two tier system and six deductive code descriptions utilized as the modality to coach teachers at PRHS. This could impact future studies and development of this framework.

To explore the faculty voices and impact on relationships in the school culture, trust, identity, and community emerge from literature as impacting elements of school culture promoting relationships. According to the literature, one's positionality is influenced by race and class which impacts this trust in relationships and affects the establishment of a community. A tool developed by the PRHS Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to facilitate building trusting student-faculty relationships in the school community is the Instructional Coaching Framework. This tool impacts the growth of faculty as it is used to develop and nurture pedagogy, interrelationships, and equitable practice with instructional coaching to promote relationships in culture.

There are 6 principles and descriptions (Table 1) in the ICF that progress the direction of the school culture: Building relationships (BR), Student Centered Learning (CL), Classroom Leadership (CL), Teaching for Equity (TFE), Growth Mindset (GM). The six principles are research based and adapted by the instructional coaching team to align with the PRHS vision to carry its mission. These six principles were applied as the 6 deductive codes as a tool in providing a path to informing student-faculty relationships impact on the school culture. Using these codes can indicate if the principles exist in the PRHS community and culture. This coding process explores the six ICF principles and connects the elements of trust, identity, and community in the school culture. This coding process unpacks any correlations between these emerging themes from the literature and the ICF.

Table 1
Deductive Codes from Instructional Coaching Framework

Tier 1 Principles	Brief Principle Description
Building Relationships (BR)	Cura Personalis, Building Community, Trust
Student Centered Learning (SCL)	High-Impact Strategies, Voice and Choice, Intentional Planning, Assessment and Feedback
Tier 2 Principles	**Brief Principle Description**
Classroom Leadership (CL)	Create Environment for Learning, Student Buy In, Equity and Empowerment
Teaching for Equity (TFE)	Building Cultural Competence, Culturally Sustaining Curriculum
Growth Mindset (GM)	Self-Care, Expanding our Teaching Toolkits, Expanding Content Knowledge, Utilizing, Feedback, Professional Growth Opportunities Executive Functioning
Team and Community (TC)	Healthy and Productive Teams, Partnership with Families, Accountability, Creating Shared Resources, Communication, Support for other Teams in the School

Note. Deductive codes reflect six principles from the instructional coaching framework.

Research Questions

The researcher proposes to answer the following research questions employing a framework of critical race theory (CRT):

1. How does the school culture at the school that works promote (student-faculty) relationships?
2. How does one's positionality impact a vision of trust and strong community at the school that works?

Context of Setting

The Private Religious High School (Est. 2011), graduated its first class in 2016, is known as "the school that works". This phrase was derived from a Network Model of 37 schools as they developed the school framework. PRHS was an idea first nourished by the founder adopting the Network Model, to create a formidable functioning school like no other in the Philadelphia area. This school would be financed based upon each student being provided with a work-study job along with family contributions, to pay for their private school tuition. Also, this school would be a Catholic school for low-income students from all faiths who could not otherwise afford a private education. According to the school that works website:

> A college preparatory, Catholic school for students of all faiths, nurtures and challenges young people to recognize and realize their full potential as they learn to love others, grow in their faiths, and serve the common good (Mission Statement, 2021). Our population consists of students with a per capita average household income for the class of 2022 at $10,255. At PRHS, the student ethnicity is made up of African Americans (67%),

> Latino/Hispanic (25%), Two or more races (5%), Asian (2%), White (1%). (PRHS Impact Report, 2020)

PRHS has been growing since its inception, coming from humble beginnings. The school started off in a rented catholic school building and church built in the early 1920's. Through the next several years and by strong financial decisions and campaigns, the "school that works" now has its very own state of the art facility to call home. It represents the sheer values of hope, love, and gratitude which the school community members promote, replicating each and every day.

Since its inception, the school wide body has formulated demographic dynamics intertwined developing a school culture. Data collected by PRHS's Middle States Team in the 2019-2020 school year provided evidence of the demographic composition of the faculty body. This data consisted of 26 instructional staff (academics), 3 members of the dean's office (deans), and 17 administrative staff (administration). The Middle States Team gathered data during the 2019-2020 school year consisting of the faculty body composition: years of experience, highest education level completed, and race/ethnicity utilizing a google survey to all departments. The total years of experience members of the faculty have in the job role which they currently serve goes as follows. Of the 26 instructional staff members, 5 have one year or less experience, 11 have two-five years of experience, 7 have six-ten years' of experience, 2 have eleven-twenty years of experience, and 1 has over twenty years of experience. Of the 3 members of the dean's office, 1 has one year or less experience, 1 has two-five years' experience, and 1 has six-ten years' experience. From the administrative office, 5 have one year or less of experience, 7 have two-five years' experience, 2 have six-ten years of experience, and 3 have over twenty years of experience (Middle States Team, School Organization and Staff, 2020).

The highest level of education categorized began with associate's degree or no degree to Doctorate completion. Of the 26 instructional staff members, 0 had an associate degree or no degree, 8 had a bachelor's degree, 15 had a master's degree, 3 had a master's degree plus, and 1 had a doctorate. Of the 17 administrative staff, 0 had an associate's degree or no degree, 13 had bachelor's degrees, 3 had master's degrees, and 1 had a doctorate. From the dean's office, 2 had a bachelor's degree and 1 had a doctorate. (Middle States Team, School Organization and Staff, 2020).

The race/ethnicity demographics of the total faculty and staff are as follows, representing the 2019-2020 school year. 10% African-American, 85% Caucasian/White, 5% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0% Native American, 0% other (Middle States Team, School Organization and Staff, 2020). Table 2 illustrates the total faculty body survey by the PRHS Middle States Team in the school year 2019-2020. This data contributes to the school wide demographic composition of 46 total faculty.

Table 2
Demographic Overview of Faculty

Department & # of Faculty	Years of Experience	Highest Level of Education
Dean's Office (3)	One year or less, 1 2-5, 1 6-10, 1 11-20, 0 20+, 0	Associate or no degree, 0 Bachelors, 2 Masters, 0 Masters Plus, 0 Doctorate, 1
Administrative (Administration) 17	One year or less, 5 2-5, 7 6-10, 3 11-20, 0 20+, 2	Associate or no degree, 0 Bachelors, 8 Masters, 15 Masters Plus, 3 Doctorate, 1
Instructional Staff (Academics) 26	One year or less, 5 2-5, 11 6-10, 2 11-20, 2 20+, 1	Associate or no degree, 0 Bachelors, 8 Masters, 15 Masters Plus, 3 Doctorate, 1

Note. Statistics gathered by the Middle States Team not researcher. Race/Ethnicity data collected anonymously and reported as follows = 10% African-American, 85% Caucasian/White, 5% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0% Native American, 0% other.

This context to the setting and demographic configuration of the school body grants the researcher the ability to support the stories shared from the perspectives of faculty. This is necessary in showcasing positionality and their impact on attitudes, beliefs, and values shaping relationships at PRHS.

Participants

The participants of this study are a range of diverse faculty members from the academic, deans, and administration departments. Also, participants were selected based on a diversity of demographics: title, department, age, gender association if any, race/ethnicity identification, highest education achievement and level of experience. Table 3 highlights the demographic overview from the 13 selected participants who completed the faculty interest survey.

Table 3
Demographic Overview of Participants

Department	Gender Identification	Ethnicity	Race	Age Range	Years of Experience	Highest Level of Education
Dean's Office 3	Female, 0 Male, 3	Not Hispanic/ Latino	Black, 2 White, 1	21-25, 0 26-30, 0 31-35, 0 36-40, 1 41-up, 2	1-2, 2 3-5, 0 6-10, 0 11-15, 0 16+, 1	Bachelors, 1 Bachelors Plus, 1 Masters, 0 Masters Plus, 0 Doctorate, 1
Administration (Leadership) 4	Female, 2 Male, 2	Not Hispanic/ Latino	Black, 1 White, 3	21-25, 0 26-30, 0 31-35, 1 36-40, 1 41-up, 2	1-2, 2 3-5, 0 6-10, 1 11-15, 1 16+, 0	Bachelors, 0 Bachelors Plus, 0 Masters, 2 Masters Plus, 2 Doctorate, 0
Academics (Teachers) 6	Female, 4 Male, 2	Not Hispanic/ Latino	Black, 1 White, 5	21-25, 2 26-30, 4 31-35, 0 36-40, 0 41-up, 0	1-2, 3 3-5, 2 6-10, 1 11-15, 0 16+, 0	Bachelors, 2 Bachelors Plus, 1 Masters, 3 Masters Plus, 0 Doctorate, 0

Note. Race/Ethnicity Data collected anonymously and reported as follows = 10% African-American, 85% Caucasian/White, 5% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0% Native American, 0% other.

The threshold of six total participants from each department provides adequate student-faculty relationship data to collect, examine, and reflect on within a sufficient time frame. Investigating data collected from three different departments afford freedom to explore diverse relationships within a school setting. PRHS 'ten departments consist of academics, school counseling, college counseling, administration, campus ministry, work-study, deans, admissions, development, and transportation. With many different departments at PRHS, utilizing more than three departments would provide even greater varying data to interpret. For the purpose of this study, due to time constraints and workload, I employed three distinct departments, which produced variance from each department. Not having sufficient time to employ all departments is a limitation and evidence of shortcoming of this study.

The three departments consist of academics, dean's office, and administration all have different interpretations when interacting with students. For example, each department interacts with students in a variety of settings. The academic department is structured to focus on interactions in the classroom. The dean's office at PRHS, main interactions with students are creating culture outside the classroom in common areas throughout the school such as the family room, hub or lunchroom spaces. At PRHS, administration's platform is geared in leadership toward interacting with students mostly messaging during school wide events, assemblies, classroom observation, or a random greeting while crossing paths in a common space.

From these varying interactions, the participants from each department had the opportunity to provide different perspectives. I selected the academic department to take part in the study because it is the largest department (26 faculty) and has the most potential for student interactions amongst all departments (Middle States Team, School Organization and Staff, 2020).

At PRHS, teachers spend the most time in classrooms with the opportunity to engage and interact with students daily. The dean's office was chosen because of the unique role of developing and providing the main disciplinary measures for students and also working as lead technicians in creating the school culture. The importance of incorporating the dean's office and including administration is vital to this study. These two departments have the distinct responsibility of impacting and making the final decisions of tools such as frameworks, professional development, value & norm systems, pedagogical practices or school policies used to shape the school culture. Policies are carried but stakeholders Brown (2016) argues policy as text is an authoritative complex artifact passed down becoming a product from historical and social context. Policies should be engaged with and made sense of by those the policy effects in the school community, making policy discourse (Brown, 2016) to really drive effective understanding and change.

The administration department provides an element other departments cannot provide; student-faculty relationships among the leadership team. Bryk & Schneider (2004) contend that principal leadership action is a vital factor for growing relational trust in the school culture as they "establish both respect and personal regard for others, acknowledge vulnerabilities, actively listen to concerns, and eschew arbitrary actions". Leadership has the opportunity to be seen less frequently but when given the opportunity to interact with students, extremely influential. For example, as the principal leads by example, they can be known as the "captain", "president", or "boss" of a school. When students individually interact with the principal, their leadership style can have an effect on how a student relates to them and the school community, impacting their relationship and the school culture.

All other departments such as college counseling, school counseling, work-study, admissions, development, and campus ministry have highly important and invaluable roles within the school setting. They also share similarities with other departments which can lead to less variance in data. For example, the admissions, development, and campus ministry department school settings allow for their own different types of conversations and interactions with students. But they share the commonality of not having a daily consistent set time to interact with students. Due to the nature of their work, there can be instances where these particular departments can go an entire day without interacting with students. The relationship between departments and students are essential to gathering and analyzing data. Deploying the three departments of academics, dean, and administration will guide in the representation of showcasing distinctive student-faculty relationships impacting the PRHS school culture.

Methods of Data Collection

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), data collection instruments were distributed in three rounds. The first round began within a week of IRB approval. A google survey was administered to the entire faculty. Faculty members received a formal email invitation to complete the google survey. The survey included the option to volunteer as a participant, a description of confidentiality, purpose, and the future implications of this study. Also, the google survey is compiled with structured questions, requesting the participant to select their title, department, age, identification, ethnicity, race, years of experience, and education levels. From the data gathered by the google survey, the researcher purposefully recruited a max of six faculty members from each of these three departments; academic, deans, and administration. I purposely recruited no more than six faculty members per

department to provide a doable threshold for enough quality time to conduct the study and selected each participant accordingly to construct a diverse range of faculty representation.

Within a week of closing the google survey, the second round began with the scheduling of all three departments and participants involved using the SignUpGenius online program. Each interview was solely facilitated by the researcher. I formally emailed each participant a link to Signup Genius, an individual in-person interview with each participant along with the six structured questions. The participant had the option to read over the interview questions, write responses to questions, or note any initial thoughts. The reason for requesting participants to review the interview questions allowed the participant time to think and reflect prior to asking the same interview questions. This provided the participant the opportunity to gather initial ideas before expanding on their thoughts with richer responses during the interview questioning process. Then, I asked all six interview questions and recorded each interview using Zoom. record each interview. During this time I manually record notes and memo in each interview to review later as initial thoughts used for the coding process.

Structured Interview Questions:

1. Can you tell me what school culture means to you?
2. Can you tell me about the school culture here at PRHS?
3. Can you provide examples of what it looks like at PRHS?
4. Can you tell me what is in a school culture that builds trust?
5. Can you tell me what a vision of a strong community looks like at PRHS?
6. Can you tell me how your own story impacts the school community at PRHS?

All participants from the three different departments consisting of the academic, dean's, and administration offices were formally emailed a narrative reflection document. The narrative reflection had a brief overview of the study and purpose of participants providing responses that reflect on their own stories and practices. The participants were asked to write as much as they feel is necessary to capture their story and given a week to complete this task. The writing prompt was purposely constructed to have each participant reflect on their experiences with student relationships, trust, and the school community at PRHS identified by literature as central themes. This method of narrative reflection has the potential to provide a deeper insight to each participant's identity and positionality as it relates to each individual's own story and experiences at PRHS. This is essential to the study as the narrative reflects the potential to derive the different accounts of faculty members' views on their beginnings of relationships and their influence on relationships with students at PRHS.

Narrative Reflection Question:

1. Provide a detailed narrative about your meaning of trust and what it looks like to you as an educator at the high school that works.
    - **A.** Describe a time where you effectively or ineffectively worked with a student at the school that works. Explain if trust in your relationship was a factor.
    - **B.** After this moment, how did the results from this occasion impact the school community?

Data Analysis

To understand the student-faculty relationships at PRHS, the analysis of all data gathered from the survey, semi-structured interview, and narrative reflection was sought to investigate

these relationships' impact on the school culture. Through the analysis, I examined the perspectives of faculty exploring connecting themes of trust, identity, and community as links evident in building student-faculty relationships within the school community.

Qualitative Analysis.

The sole researcher responsibility is to collect, transcribe, and code the data for the qualitative analysis process as this took a vast amount of time to conduct. Ravitch & Carl (2016) explain qualitative analysis as a means to interpret and understand data collected by organizing and managing, engaging, and displaying the data gathered. It is my duty to interpret the faculty perspectives and bring to light the phenomena from the data and maintain the authenticity of their voices. My data analysis of the 13 interviews and narrative reflections was an iterative process consisting of organization, description, and displaying information which represents the participants narratives. The vast amount of data requiring reduction and interpretation presented a challenge. Applying my theoretical and conceptual frameworks afforded me the opportunity to examine and identify patterns within the data to gather evidence advising the two research questions. Saldana (2016) states patterns provide an essential level of a relationship existing between unity and multiplicity. To witness any repetitive or regular patterns in understanding student-faculty relationships within the school culture my thought process was to allow the data to speak to me asking: What story is the data trying to tell? Does this story align with the survey data? What do the perspectives of faculty reveal? This thought process supported me in the process of analyzing the data collected in identifying the patterns emerging from the faculty perspectives.

The 13 semi-structured interviews and narrative reflection prompts were analyzed through a deliberate process. The audio/visual interviews were recorded through Zoom then uploaded to be transcribed with the use of the Temi program. Through Temi the audio was converted to text allowing for verbatim transcription. The 13 narrative reflections were pre-developed with the narrative reflection prompt and specific for each faculty participant with their own individualized Google Document before being administered. To organize and manage data, each participant had their individualized codebook to store data separate from other participants.

Next was the reduction process which started with the interview transcription in Temi by removing repetitive statements and wording along with unrelated data. Next, I read through all transcriptions and narrative reflections once to get reacquainted with the faculty interactions while recording researcher notes summarizing any initial thoughts before preparing for the coding process.

The next reading of the interviews and narrative reflections was to evolve the first cycle of codes consisting of the process of in vivo coding. In vivo descriptors were created by taking "from what the participant himself says," summarizing key participant excerpts into a phrase or word known as a descriptor, then numbered which allowed for organization (easy location and to identify each comment) (Saldana, 2016). Utilizing the participant stories as codes was not only important in acquiring authenticity and validity to the research study but also an opportunity for faculty voices to inform the research questions. The in vivo style of coding afforded the opportunity to capture and represent an entire participant excerpt into one descriptor. Saldana (2016) describes a descriptive code as a summary of the primary topic of the excerpt. From the in

vivo descriptor summary, I identified patterns referencing deductive codes in the second coding cycle.

The second cycle of codes in the analysis process consisted of coding the in vivo descriptors a specified color according to its deductive code association using six deductive codes: Building Relationships (BR), Student-Centered Learning (SCL), Classroom Leadership (CL), Teaching for Equity (TFE), Growth Mindset (GM), and Team and Community (TC). These 6 principles were applied as the six deductive codes (Table 1) as a tool in providing a path to informing student-faculty relationships impact on the school culture. Saldana (2016) suggests utilizing a list of predetermined codes to coexist with the conceptual framework, paradigm, and research intentions. The six deductive codes were imposed on the data as a way to provide evidence or non-evidence with assisting in improvements of the framework in any future professional development.

Table 1
Deductive Codes from Instructional Coaching Framework

Tier 1 Principles	Brief Principle Description
Building Relationships (BR)	Cura Personalis, Building Community, Trust
Student Centered Learning (SCL)	High-Impact Strategies, Voice and Choice, Intentional Planning, Assessment and Feedback
Tier 2 Principles	**Brief Principle Description**
Classroom Leadership (CL)	Create Environment for Learning, Student Buy In, Equity and Empowerment
Teaching for Equity (TFE)	Building Cultural Competence, Culturally Sustaining Curriculum
Growth Mindset (GM)	Self-Care, Expanding our Teaching Toolkits, Expanding Content Knowledge, Utilizing, Feedback, Professional Growth Opportunities Executive Functioning
Team and Community (TC)	Healthy and Productive Teams, Partnership with Families, Accountability, Creating Shared Resources, Communication, Support for other Teams in the School

Note. Deductive codes reflect six principles from the instructional coaching framework.

This coding method was used to explore patterns coinciding with the school that works Instructional Coaching Framework. The ICF was developed by the PRHS Instructional Leadership Team in the summer of 2020 as a framework and coaching tool for supporting teacher growth in pedagogy, intrapersonal relationships, and equitable practices. This coaching framework has a Tier 1 & 2 with 6 guiding principles (two principles in Tier 1 and four principles in Tier 2). Each of the six principles has sub features followed by descriptions of what these sub features look like in the educational setting. I decided to use the ICF Tier 1: (BR) & (SCL) and Tier 2: (CL), (TFE), (GM), and (TC) principles as deductive codes providing a path to informing student-faculty relationships impact on the school culture. This deductive coding dynamic of applying Tier 1 & 2 principles as codes provides a way to analyze the existing relationships and the beliefs, values, and attitudes within this framework. This method employs the ability to distinguish implications of relational elements existing in the ICF as a practice in instructional coaching to support educators. This tool also explores the literature emerging themes of trust, identity, and community in the faculty perspectives. The data from any present agency between the student-faculty relationships impacting the school culture is revealed in chapter 4 and the instructional coaching framework will be further explored in chapter 5 for any future implications.

The last read through on the data was to apply the third cycle deductive codes of trust, identity, and community (Table 4) to spotlight patterns which came directly from literature focusing on aspects of relationships within a school culture. This process was imposed on the data by me coding the in vivo descriptors as a way to make connections to the established literature themes of trust, identity, and community across the data set. To continue the iterative

process, each theme was imposed on the data by coding descriptors that were associated as either Trust (T), Identity (I), or Community (C) or aspects of each, next to its in vivo descriptor in the codebook. Trust (146) was the most common literature based theme appearing from participant conversations. Community (118) appeared second and Identity (46) third as the literature themes were prevalent in all participant interviews.

Lastly, to end the third cycle, the frequency of each emerging theme (Table 4) was coded as Agency (A), Challenges of Covid-19 (CC), Hiring Culture, (HC), or Inclusion (IC) as each emerged from the participant interviews. Agency (25) was the most frequent emerging theme and Hiring Culture (15) was the least. Coding each emerging theme allowed for me to showcase the frequency of each emerging theme and enhance the validity of the study. I discovered the faculty perceptions reflected these literature and emerging themes as they were explicitly referenced in participant conversations and ICF.

Table 4
Frequency of Literature and Emerging Theme Codes in Participant Interviews

Participant	Trust	Identity	Community	Agency	Challenges of Covid-19	Hiring Culture	Inclusion
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Faculty #1	12	6	9	3	1	1	4
Faculty #2	9	1	6	1	2	0	1
Faculty #3	11	3	12	2	1	0	1
Faculty #4	13	3	11	1	2	3	0
Faculty #5	11	4	7	1	1	0	0
Faculty #6	8	3	9	1	1	1	2
Faculty #7	10	5	11	1	1	3	0
Faculty #8	11	2	9	3	2	1	2
Faculty #9	14	4	14	5	1	2	2
Faculty #10	9	5	12	2	2	1	1
Faculty #11	8	0	5	1	4	0	1
Faculty #12	12	6	8	2	2	3	2
Faculty #13	14	4	5	2	1	0	4
Total	**142**	**46**	**118**	**25**	**21**	**15**	**20**

Note. Frequency gathered through the 3rd cycle of the coding process for trust, identity, community, agency, challenges of Covid-19, hiring culture, and inclusion in participant interviews.

As I continued on the journey in the qualitative analysis process, I started to comprehend the attitudes of faculty and how their relationships impact the school culture. There were frequent connections expressed about stakeholders' experience within the school community and how trust, identity, and community influenced the attitudes, values, and beliefs at PRHS. There were both distinctive findings and non-findings from the participant voices that led to the understanding of student-faculty relationships at PRHS. The faculty interviews and narrative reflections provided an opportunity to tell their story beyond what the statistical data told us, which is important in order to better our community experience.

Validity

As I am a faculty member in the research setting, there is a need to address my positionality in this research action study. The complex identity as the interviewer and relationships amongst the interviewees can interfere with the results of data. Also, being a member of the academic and instructional leadership team can have an influence on the validity of the research. There are assumptions the researcher is aware of as working relationships do exist between the researcher and participants before conducting the interviews and during the coding process. I knew of the participants' own identity and ways each participant worked within their title at PRHS to foster relationships between students. The findings of the analysis serve as a means to showcase the faculty voices, their perspectives, and their own understanding on relationships which impact the school culture at PRHS.

Based on the relationship between the three, to combat researcher bias as best as possible, I employed an iterative process of data collection with surveys, interviews, and narrative reflections. Discussing with my committee to better understand my interpretations from the data

helped me align these interpretations in a researched format. To avoid my own biases and assumptions, research memos and note taking guided me when creating interview, survey, and narrative reflection questions. Triangulating the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) discovered through the methods using a google survey, structured interviews, and a narrative reflection question, allows for a variety of methods to collect, increasing the chances of validity and credibility. This award the opportunity to protect the fidelity of participants' thoughts and dispositions that were confined to me. This iterative process of reflection, analysis, and triangulation ensured confidence to validate conclusions.

Security

All information collected during the course of this study is kept in a password protected computer and remains confidential amongst the researcher, principal investigator, and Kutztown University for academic research purposes. The research material may be kept for further use in future follow-up studies. There is minimal risk to participate in this study, such as a breach of confidentiality and/or embarrassment since your name is linked to your responses. Participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Kutztown University is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. The IRB will have access to study information.

Confidentiality.

Pseudonyms are used throughout the study to keep faculty, students, and the school confidential. To replace faculty names the researcher numbered each faculty in the order of interviews. When faculty referenced student names, the initials X.X. is used to protect their identity. The school setting is identified as a private religious high school (PRHS) or referred to

as the school that works for the use of this study. I discussed the meaning and importance of using the school's name with committee members. With approval, after careful consideration and understanding of my own biases and positionality having implications, we decided to not reveal the school's name in the study with respect to the establishment. As a researcher, I strive to create a counter narrative to the use of the term "urban school" label that further contributes to the false narratives of large cities like Philadelphia being schools where education is producing students below standards and learning does not take place in the schools. I wanted to showcase "PRHS" as an example of a successful, effective, and high quality school that is still growing in areas needed to support its community and educational advancements. Providing readers with an "urban school" title further misleads to the labeling of the people we serve in the PRHS community as being people of color, underserved, and underprivileged who are lost and need saving. Instead, my hope is to tell the story of systemic oppression as the issue, not the community we serve. Also, the goal is to empower other network model communities with a strong example of what a healthy school culture can look like.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was the confined scope and size due to time constraints. The survey sample size was 32 respondents allowing for the analysis but limiting the voices of faculty. A larger sample size with more perspectives from faculty would enhance the qualitative data to inform the research study. Another limitation in this study is the missing voices of stakeholders specifically students would strengthen the studies understanding of relationships in the school community. Without student perspectives the narratives of how relationships impact their story of community in the school culture is untold. The collection of data from students at

PRHS and their interpretation of the relationships with faculty could allow for a major perspective to be included in the research study. Also absent are the diverse faculty dispositions from the departments of college and career readiness, counselling, work study, development, admissions, campus ministry, transportation, human resources, and business office which would benefit the collective narrative to learning about the relationships within the school culture.

Chapter 4

Results

Chapter Overview

Contents in this chapter represent results of the qualitative study coordinated to better understand how diverse stakeholders conceive of community. By enhancing understanding of the way in which folks perceive community, this study aims to orient the constellation of existing beliefs and attitudes among a select group of administrators and faculty at the school that works. The analysis of the qualitative data collected provides the framing to answer two research questions:

RQ1: How does the school culture at the school that works promote (student-faculty) relationships?

RQ2: How does one's positionality impact a vision of trust and strong community at the school that works?

To explore findings for responding to the two research questions qualitative data was gathered through the use of a three-pronged data collection process with these instruments: *Faculty Interest Survey*, *Semi-Structured Interviews*, and *Narrative Reflections.* The study was enhanced by this triangulation process of collecting qualitative data with multiple collection instruments to reinforce the reliability of the study results (P. Fusch et al. 2018). From the triangulation, the emerging themes surfaced through review of the literature, organizational management, and engagement with the data when employing the coding mechanics. To identify significant recurrences, the data obtained was analyzed for patterns through specific frameworks,

critical race theory and critical consciousness, to determine how the data informed the research questions.

The data collected was analyzed through a coding process and descriptive analysis then applied to three themes transpiring from literature. These themes were connected to all faculty conversations: *Trust*, *Identity*, and *Community*. These three themes connect to faculty conversations and are selected as they embody the frameworks of CRT and critical consciousness. Bryk & Schneider (2004) describes *trust* developing in relationships through respect, competence in core role responsibilities, personal regard for others, and personal integrity as imperative which was an aspect in the conversations with faculty. Another literature theme is *identity* as Ladson-Billings (2000) explains the need for educators to understand and value student culture, communication, and other members of their cultural group since schools are seen as institutions where students of color cannot fully be themselves. Elements of identity are reflected throughout the collected voices of faculty as an instrumental component impacting relationships in the school culture at PRHS. Lastly, *community* emerged from the literature and was a factor in faculty interactions promoting communal relations. Community is described by Schaps (2003) as basic fundamental needs such as a sense of safety, belogning, autonomy, connectedness, and competence as vital to shape learning and human development to craft healthy relationships within a school culture. Through the triangulation of data collected, all literature based emerging themes are analyzed to examine the relationship between student-faculty relationships impacting the school culture at PRHS.

The faculty interest survey collected the following demographic data: title, department, gender identification, race, ethnicity, age range, years of experience in current role, and highest

level of education. The participants then were selected to create a range of diverse faculty members from the academic, deans, and administration departments since each department interacts with students in a variety of settings. The purpose of selecting participants from these three departments is for their unique relationships with students and faculty and the opportunity for interactions in: classroom/pullouts, leading assemblies/events, open communal spaces, within the school community. As other departments provide valuable perspectives as well, these three departments are selected and analyzed through the framework lenses. The different relational components by these three distinct departments provide the most opportunity for relationships to be impacted as they were identified prior to research. The academic department has the main purpose of instruction in the classroom which offers the most opportunity to craft relationships or weaken school culture and relationships amongst students and teachers. The dean's office's main objective is to lead the school wide culture through fostering relationships in spaces outside the classroom. The administration's platform is geared toward leading both students and faculty creating a dynamic relationship within the school culture. All three department interactions have a meaningful role in generating student-faculty relationships in the school culture at PRHS.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted through the use of scheduled Zoom meetings. Faculty responded to six interview questions constructed by research based themes that impact relationships and school culture. Before utilizing deductive codes the participants' stories were coded into in vivo descriptors to capture these voices. The transcripts were coded using deductive codes deriving from the the school that works Instructional Coaching Framework (ICF) six principles and descriptions: Building Relationships (BR), Student Centered Learning (SCL), Classroom Leadership (CL), Teach for Equity (TFE), Growth Mindset (GM),

Team and Community (TC), designed by the schools Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) in the summer of 2020. The ILT shared sentiments about the development of this framework as "prioritizing the things that our community thinks is important to teaching. . . coaches having shared foundational language. . . it allows for more communication and partnership. . . building relationships, everything stems from there. You can't really teach for equity if you hadn't built those relationships in your community" (ILT, interview, January 19th, 2021).

The six principles from the ICF were applied as 6 deductive codes as a tool in providing a path to informing student-faculty relationships impact on the school culture. This deductive coding dynamic of applying Tier 1 & 2 six principles as codes establishes a route to analyzing the existing relationships in the school culture and also implications of the ICF as a coaching tool to support educators. This strategy lays the groundwork to the possibility to redevelop the ICF model by contributing this study to future research for faculty professional growth.

Lastly, the narrative reflections were constructed for participants to share effective and ineffective moments with a student at PRHS by completing a two part writing prompt in order to better understand student-faculty relationships. These reflections were coded employing the same technique as the interviews. The following section will seek to answer both research questions by analyzing the data set of: **1)** Faculty Interest Survey **2)** Semi-Structured Interviews **3)** Narrative Reflections.

Descriptive Information

Survey Respondent Demographics

A total of 32 individuals responded to the faculty interest survey sent via email invitation in the fall of 2020. Analysis was conducted in order to frame demographics contributing to one's

positionality influencing the school culture and relationships forged. Out of the 32 respondents, 53% were from the Academic (Teachers) Team, 16% from the Administration (Leadership) Team, and 9% of the Dean's Office. 75% of the respondents are from these 3 departments representing a significant portion of the sample size in this study. 53.1% of respondents identified as female and 46.9% identified as male. The survey respondent results displayed an age range consisting of 34.4% (26-30), 18.8% (41+ and 21-25), 15.6% (36-40), and 12.4% (31-35). This age range represents 53.2% of the respondents falling into the 21-30 age bracket and 46.8% in the 31+ age bracket. From the 32 total respondents, 46.9% of respondents had 1-5 years of experience and 31.3% having 3-5 years of experience in the role they currently serve. A possible factor affecting this demographic is faculty who have recently transitioned to a new role could alter these figures. However, 78.2% of the respondents had 5 or less years of experience in their current role. Another notable feature of the demographic is from the highest level of education as 65.7% have a Master's degree or higher in other words 21 out of the 32 respondents have an advanced degree. These demographics of age range, experience in current roles, and advanced degrees correlate to the notion of PRHS faculty being young and inexperienced in most roles but capable of educational advancements and reform by the evidence of high attaining degrees. This generates a stigma perceived as a faculty that is "not racially diverse, young, inexperienced, not great at relating to the demographic of students, but smart". Chang et al. (2020) indicates that faculty with advanced degrees are more open to new ideas, change, collaboration, mindfulness, and innovative practices indicating this as a value at PRHS. Faculty with advanced degrees can contribute to more positive student outcomes (Chang et al., 2020) when relationships exist.

Of the 32 total respondents 98% replied that their ethnicity was not Hispanic or Latino. This finding supports the claim of the lack of Latino/Hispanic faculty representation. This revelation in respondents' ethnicity of Latino/Hispanic does not mimic its student body's ethnicity at PRHS since 25% of the student body identifies as Latino/Hispanic (Middle States Team, 2020). Lastly, it is important to note 75% of faculty respondents identify their race as White, 15.6% as black, 6.3% as Asian, and 3.1% identify with multiple races as I utilize CRT to illustrate the makings of the PRHS community.

The social construct of race/ethnicity influences one's positionality and impacts the culture and relational dynamics at PRHS. Therefore noting 75% of faculty respondents identify their race as White, 15.6% as black, 6.3% as Asian, and 3.1% identify with multiple races is essential. The population breakdown of races in the city of Philadelphia is: White 40.7%, Black 42.1%, 14.7% Latino/Hispanic, 7.2% Asian, and 3.1% Two or more races (United States Census Bureau, 2019). The population breakdown of races of the student body at PRHS is: African Americans 67%, Latino/Hispanic 25%, Two or more races 5%, Asian 2%, White 1% (PRHS Impact Report, 2020). This racial demographic is disproportionate and not representative of the population served when compared to the composition of the student body and city of Philadelphia where most of the students call home. The race distribution of the total faculty is 85% white (Middle States Team, 2020) reflects mostly white positionalities imposing whiteness on schooling factors such as pedagogy, culture, policies, and practices normalizing and shaping false views and skewing perceptions of the social world and perceptions (Bell, 2019). Through a lens of CRT, identifying this disproportion is evident to combat oppressive force in school systems dominated by a racial group (Bennett, 2019) that often denies its existence.

Participant Demographics

A total of 13 faculty were selected from the survey respondents by the researcher to establish a broad range of diversity based on the demographics of gender identification, race, ethnicity, age, level of experience, and education levels to inform the research questions. This process of participant recruitment is important as it offers the researcher qualitative data from differing voices of faculty in three specific departments. All 13 participants were chosen from the three departments which this study focuses on. Of the 13 faculty participants, 3 were from the Dean's Office, 4 of the Administration (Leadership) Team, and 6 of the Academic (Teachers) Team. Participants agreed to meet for a zoom structured interview followed by the completion of a narrative reflection.

The results of the faculty interest survey of faculty from the 3 chosen departments are illustrated in Table 5. Table 3 represents the demographics of only the survey 32 respondents compared to Table 2 (refer to chapter 3) representing the demographics of all faculty from research conducted by the PRHS Middle States Team. Providing both tables allows for a broader picture at the school macro level illustrating the racial underrepresentation of people of color in total faculty compared to this research study survey respondents. From the data gathered in the survey, there are possible differences amongst each demographic. A significant difference is the participants' gender identification within the Dean's Office as all 3 identify as male. Another significant difference is an important disparity with the race of participants in Academics (Teachers) as 1 of the 6 identified as black while 5 identified as white. In addition to race, there was a major distinction with ethnicity as no participant identified as Hispanic/Latino. Of the 32 total respondents only 2 replied ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino while no participants from the

Dean's Office, Administration, or Academics reported ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino. The age range of 7 participants are in the 36-up categories and notably all from the Dean's Office and Administration (Leadership) Team. Of the 6 Academic (Teachers) there are no participants in the 31-up age range. Another important difference is the years of experience as only 1 participant had 16+ years of experience and 1 participant with 11-15 years of experience.

Table 5
Demographics Per Participant

Faculty # and Dept.	Gender Identification	Ethnicity	Race	Age Range	Years of Experience	Highest Level of Education
Faculty #1 - L	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	Black	41-up	1-2	Masters Plus Hours
Faculty #2 - D	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	36-40	1-2	Doctorate
Faculty #3 - L	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	36-40	11-15	Masters Plus Hours
Faculty #4 - L	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	36-40	6-10	Masters
Faculty #5 - D	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	Black	41-up	16+	Bachelors
Faculty #6 - D	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	Black	41-up	1-2	Bachelors Plus Hours
Faculty #7 - L	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	31-35	1-2	Masters
Faculty #8 - A	Male	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	26-30	1-2	Masters
Faculty #9 - A	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	26-30	6-10	Masters
Faculty #10 - A	Male	Not	White	26-30	1-2	Masters

		Hispanic/Latino				
Faculty #11 - A	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	21-25	1-2	Bachelors
Faculty #12 - A	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	Black	21-25	3-5	Bachelors Plus Hours
Faculty #13 - A	Female	Not Hispanic/Latino	White	26-30	3-5	Bachelors

Note. In Faculty # & Department Column, D = Dean's Office, L = Leadership (Administration), A = Academics (Teachers), each faculty member is anonymously identified by a number

Qualitative Findings

At the beginning of this research, the focus has always been on the voices of the faculty at PRHS. To capture this phenomena and the influence of student-faculty relationships on the school culture at PRHS, qualitative data was collected from 13 faculty participants (Table 3) through semi-structured interviews and narrative reflections to gain a better understanding of how folks make sense of perceived community. Themes emerging around community related to the literature were agency, sense of belonging, inclusion, and hiring culture all impacting relationships. Therefore, these two data collection sets along with the faculty interest survey describe findings and major patterns that develop through analysis of relevance between the initial in vivo codes emerging through the reading of the transcripts and research literature on themes connected to relationships and school culture.

Description of Literature Themes

The three major themes of *trust, identity, and community* emerged from literature as crucial elements to fostering student-faculty relationships to shape the school culture at PRHS.

Across literature, trust was identified as an essential element impacting student-faculty relationships in the school culture. Relational trust is described in the school community as daily myriad social exchanges creating stakeholder buy-in. With relational trust in the school community expands on this asset that school professionals are more likely to trust & talk honestly amongst one another exposing vulnerability to grow professionally, make decisions collectively to generate school wide resources, reduce the sense of risk associated with change to take on reform initiatives, and develop community relations with administrators and parents to “do what’s best for students" fostering community (Bryk & Schneider, 2004; Kaplan, 2013;

Carter, 2013; Bennett, 2019; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). These factors evolving from the literature lead to trust as an element in promoting student-faculty relationships and community in the schools culture.

To influence relationships in the school culture, community was a recurring pattern in the literature as a vision of fostering relationships to further PRHS growth in supporting a strong community. This study discovered responses from the participants echoed stating community members need to be treated fairly, cared for, feel safe, and have a sense of belonging & togetherness in the school community. Having these elements present in the school culture advances a school community where faculty and students can come together in a supportive and caring safe space at PRHS benefiting all stakeholders (Block, 2018; Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016; Ishimaru, 2020; Schaps, 2003; Souza Briggs, 2003).

Another essential factor impacting student-faculty relationships within the school culture is the value held in promoting and shaping one's identity within the community. To promote one's identity, discerning the racial dominance in the student and faculty bodies provides an understanding of the imbalance of perceptions in the community. In research from Hill et al. (2020) racial identity development is influenced by experiences, beliefs, values, and behaviors interconnected with various social environments and acknowledges historical risk prevalent to marginalized groups. A school setting can enforce these heightened risks or be a positive factor in developing a sense of belonging by working towards embodying a marginalized group's racial identity (Brofrenbrenner, 1979; Ladson-Billings; 1995; Milner, 2017; Ogbu & Simons, 1998; Seider & Graves, 2020).

These themes relate to one another interacting with each other to capture faculty perspectives on the impact of relationships on school culture at PRHS. From the faculty perspectives: agency, challenges of Covid-19, hiring culture, and inclusion emerged in conversations. The three themes highlight the faculty perspectives in a layer of complexity to the involvement of systemic power structures impacting student-faculty relationships within a school culture.

Emerging Themes

The emerging themes of agency, inclusion, hiring culture, and challenges of Covid-19 gathered from participant interviews and narrative reflections, connected by the themed literature of trust, identity, and community provide context to answer both research questions. These emerging themes of agency, inclusion, hiring culture, and challenges of Covid-19 are not linear nor limited to isolation. Rather, these themes relate to one another interacting with each other through the three literature based themes of trust, identity, and community to capture faculty perspectives on the impact of relationships on school culture at PRHS. They highlight a layer of complexity to the involvement of systemic power structures impacting student-faculty relationships within a school culture and how one perceives community.

RQ1: How does the school culture at the school that works promote (student-faculty) relationships?

Agency. In conversations, the student and faculty agency in the culture of the school community was clearly impactful on the school culture but concerns with the need for more agency also arose. Faculty #12 shares their testimony on what agency from all stakeholders should look like in the school culture as, “Just everywhere, honesty and transparency. . . that should be at the root

of agency, but especially when it comes to building trust yes, definitely honesty and transparency facts, respecting people's spaces and their voices and their experiences and love (Faculty #12, interview, December 9th, 2020). Their testimony of transparency, honesty, love, respecting space, voice, and experiences are reflections of what characteristics should be in a school culture. Faculty #2 contributes how student agency changed their pedagogical practices stating:

> Students in summer school pushed me to find better ways to explain concepts. They also tested various strategies for classroom practice and engagement. The sum of these seemingly minor improvements transformed my curriculum and my relationships with students. (Faculty #2, narrative reflection, November 23rd, 2020)

This faculty sentiment is evidence of student agency transforming pedagogy practices as Ladson-Billings (1995) describes as developing cultural knowledge to advance collective empowerment, academic success, and to think critically about action. The school community would benefit from professional development incorporating tools to advance cultural knowledge just the same as schools develop content knowledge.

Faculty #8 describes agency in community by understanding the importance of cultural knowledge as an opportunity to empower young people.

Faculty #8 states:

> We developed student voice and for me, a strong community at “the school that works” is one where the students are the protagonists, a very concrete example like student X.X., leading assemblies, right. During black history month, last year. Really great example. What a strong community at “the school that works” you'd have a student that was at the center of it. (Faculty #8, interview, November 17th, 2020)

Faculty #8 details a moment when a student had the empowering opportunity to use their voice as a way to build community. This offers another piece of evidence in the school culture fostering agency and cultural knowledge as a path to bridging gaps between building relationships in the culture.

Faculty #7 shared, “Students get ample opportunities to improve. . . the school is looking to find what is in the voices. . . the culture is rooted in the culture of love, prevalent you know, within the school community so love is one of the tenants to the culture” (Faculty #7, interview, November 20th, 2020). This revelation is more evidence of the element of student voices as an agency of change fostered in care as faculty describe a culture that is rooted in love seeking to find agency from the voices in the community .

Faculty #5 describes an agency of belonging through support as having a family like culture stating, “it really reflects family. Our school culture is that one word. I would describe it as family. Closeness is another word and togetherness. . . to me, trust is earning trust is about showing love. . . it emanates throughout the hallways and the classrooms of the building on a daily basis” (Faculty #5, interview, November 19th, 2020). This evidence of family, trust, love, and closeness contributes to the notion that agency of belonging contributes to the relationships within the school culture. Flitcroft & Kelly (2016) explain closeness and togetherness as a sense of belonging in the school community as feeling happy at school, teachers care about students, treated fairly, and feel safe which are critical to a healthy school culture in promoting student-faculty relationships.

Faculty #12 also shared their experience providing examples of what school culture looks like at PRHS:

> Welcome me with open arms, as far as both students and faculty went and they were excited to get to know me to make me feel like I was at home. . . organizing assemblies on a broader spectrum assemblies that involve students of different cultural backgrounds, different organizations coming, introducing our students to different things broadening their horizons as far as that goes. . . huge crowds of people in our gym because love being together, rooting each other on because we have grown to be close knit, like I mentioned like sporting events assemblies even in our like faculty meetings people try to and not always as serious, as you would, assume faculty would be, would try to lighten the mood and, and make everyone comfortable and laugh. (Faculty #12, interview, December 9th, 2020)

Through these sentiments, examples of value, community, connectedness through love of being together highlights an agency of belonging where relationships in a school culture are both nurtured and organically developed. Faculty #12 shares examples of community when members gather together to support team oriented events for both students and adults as a path to feeling comfortable, connected to one another, and cared for. Love is one of the 13 core values PRHS purposely incorporated into the school culture to develop trust "as faculties number one job is to love our students" (PRHS Value Statements, 2019).

Faculty #7 also shared PRHS is grounded in love as being existent in the school culture. From the perspectives of Faculty members #5, #12, and #7, love is evident as an agency of belonging cultivates care in the school community by being open to earning trust in the school culture as essential to promoting student-faculty relationships. Love is an aspect of caring which develops when trusting others to validate and reciprocate this feeling by support. This could look

like a student reaching out for an extension on an assignment because they had to care for a sibling while a parent had to work. A teacher could support this student with an extension by the willingness to try and understand this challenge presented to them. If a culture of love is evident this could lead to trusting and caring relationships.

In another interview a contributing factor of agency expressed was risk taking. Faculty #3 shared:

> I feel like I've grown the most working here because so much is expected of me and just like the general belief that we can do hard things and we can do different things and new things and take risks. (Faculty #3, interview, November 17th, 2020)

The agency of risking taking in the PRHS school culture produces personal self worth and professional growth which is a value to the culture of the school community as faculty feel valued. Taking risk by taking on more, as Bryk & Schneider (2004) shared, involves trust and honesty with administrators, parents, and students as a way to implement reform practices. This is a needed feature to transform policies and develop faculty within the school community. This reflection is evidence that taking on difficult tasks and risk taking as a way for professional growth and a way to create change.

Faculty #9 shares agency stemming from the power of using your voice, “I'm a woman of faith and I think my witness and my voice in conversations impacts the school community. My story has impacted and provided examples for other teammates, women or men or those who identify as either, to realize the power in their own voice (Faculty #9, narrative reflection, December 17th, 2020). This context promotes faculty having and promoting agency influenced by their gender identity and faith as a path to empowerment to build relationships in producing

community with other teammates. This could be creating intentional safe space during grade level team meetings or faculty professional development listening to other viewpoints and discussing ideas to further carry out objectives.

Additionally, Faculty #9 shared more reflection on agency and this as an area of growth missing from the PRHS school culture:

> Faculty #9 shares, “Don't always know if the team's voice has agency in identifying a team culture. . . we have as a school for student culture is allowing students to own that and allowing student voice to shape that and allowing student voice to critique that. I think we have a lot of good seeds. I just don't always know if the right voices are the ones fertilizing them. How are we leveraging student voice more? Because again, if we go back to students are the mission and not the problem, that means that there should be a student voice in all those conversations, because if they're truly the mission, they're the ones that will tell us best. (Faculty #9, interview, December 7th, 2020)

This testimony indicates that incorporating more faculty and student voices creates agency amongst students and other stakeholders to better understand what is best for students as a driver for fulfilling the mission. Faculty #9 refers to more agency as a clear cut path to truly achieving the mission of PRHS.

According to the PRHS Impact Report (2020) the race/ethnicity student composition is 97% people of color. This factor highlights the dominating racial identity The total faculty racial identity is 85% white (Middle States Team, 2020). This data and Faculty #9 statements provide evidence indicating two different dominant narratives and power dynamics in play at PRHS. Student agency would influence the construction of policies which affect them if they are

considered at PRHS as being “students not the problem, student is the mission” (PRHS Value Statements, 2019) and “the center of the mission” (Faculty #1, interview, November 16th, 2020). Faculty #6 of the Administration (Leadership) Team shares agency as autonomy:

> There's an interest in being authentic to yourself and to what you're doing so that you know, it doesn't make sense to say like, this is how we do it around here. It's like the way we do it around here is we trust you to do what you think and know is best. (Faculty #6, interview, November 20th, 2020)

Leadership indicates agency as autonomy in the culture as trusting faculty to do what they feel is the right thing. This is an example of administration trusting adults which values autonomy in the school atmosphere. Also, this statement describes a culture determining what is best and by leadership trusting this without any inclination to validate. If faculty is unable to carry out this assumption of knowing what is best, students and family served are vulnerable to being exploited. Supporting faculty with cultural competence and knowledge to combat exploitation of African American and other children is a strategy Ladson-Billings (1995) explains as essential to communities who have not been well served in non-exploitative ways. More evidence provided by the research of Bennet (2019) supports this notion of cultural knowledge applying particularly to teachers to strength and open world views related to whiteness and structural oppression, White teachers may first have to be supported in learning reflective strategies to delve deeply into their own racial identity.

To conclude, these faculty perspectives provide authentic voices to insight into agency in empowerment of voices heard, risk taking, and belonging impact on the schools culture to promote student-faculty relationships.

Challenges of Covid-19. These faculty testimonies reveal an emerging theme: Challenges faced with the impact of Covid-19 affecting the school culture and ability to build relationships. It would be irresponsible for me to not acknowledge the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on this research study. Schools were forced by government sanctions in March 2020 to close their doors and operate virtually to slow the transmission and fight the deadly virus causing death, sickness, hardships, restrictions, and the unknown in our communities. Ultimately, the ramifications of the pandemic caused educational systems to revamp learning facilitation and plan for learning recovery while keeping our K-12 young people safe. Ultimately, the school that works created a virtual learning model for the remaining months and began to plan accordingly for the 2020-2021 school year to be conducted virtually. The opportunity of hybrid learning was unable to be offered until March 8th, 2021 as advised by stakeholders and CDC guidelines throughout the process. From here the testimonies of faculty will explore this challenge the pandemic had on the school culture and the ability to promote student-faculty relationships at PRHS.

Faculty #7 shared:

> I think that we're in the process of developing some new culture at school because of some of the different position changes and some of the challenges that we've had Covid and then different things we don't, we haven't all been together. (Faculty #7, interview, November 20th, 2020)

As Faculty #7 from the Dean's Office shared not being fully in the school building together like a regular academic year as an issue. Margolius et al (2020) states since the closing of some school buildings increased overall health and well-being has suffered feeling more and more disconnected to school adults, classmates, and the school community. This statement sheds light

on challenges of Covid-19 pandemic highlights. Underneath these challenges Margolius et al (2020) explain key concerns of isolation, disconnectedness, and difficulty feeling a sense of belonging to the school community, unhappiness which can lead to depression.

Faculty #11 describes their perspective of the school culture at PRHS as “My exposure to the school culture has been entirely virtual that's a level of community energy that I see explicitly offered virtual setting from the student and of effective and efficient communication (Faculty #11, interview, December 7th, 2020). Their statement provides context to a limited exposure to the previous school culture at PRHS as a new faculty member but encompasses a new virtual culture as to the one they know of. Faculty #11 explicitly shares an example of what this virtual culture looks like, “Online looks like Friday morning meetings that were Friday morning assemblies. . . of a virtual community with optional Friday morning assemblies which take place virtually with students, faculty, staff, parents, and often other stakeholders” (Faculty #11, interview, December 7th, 2020). Traditionally, Friday morning assemblies are in-person and intentional as a community engagement to build a sense of belonging and a gateway to social interactions creating a collective school identity. Still, Friday morning assemblies are a constant community builder presented virtually every week. When a collective identity is incomplete the dominant culture can uphold this identity of culture and language. Ogbu & Simons (1998) states in response to this school identity then being maintained, it is forced upon the culture thus developing a minority collective identity based upon opposition to white American identity (p.175). This provides evidence that by keeping the tradition of Friday assemblies, PRHS continued the growth of collective identity with virtual assemblies advancing the dynamic of social capital in the school.

Another perspective on the impact of Covid-19 on the school culture was from Faculty #3 of the Administration (Leadership) Team stating, “Atmosphere that feels like family and you know, families who hold each other accountable. . . where we are there to support one another and help each other out (Faculty #3, interview, November 17th, 2020). Faculty #3 reveals key components of the school culture which supports student-faculty interactions suggesting the culture as a family like atmosphere focusing on relationships. Bennett (2019) describes the development of relational trust as each participant understanding their reciprocal role, being consistent, care while going above and beyond, and respecting each other in order for relational trust to occur. They describe these critical elements of relational trust to foster trusting relationships in the PRHS school culture as supporting and holding each other accountable. Faculty #3 adds:

> This is the part that I miss too because of the virtual world a lot of times, but it looks like standing in the hallway and seeing like 50 kids walk past you smiling saying good morning asking you how you are. Not always just us asking students how they are. . . assembly when we're all together and we're doing things that aren't necessarily academics, but kind of focuses on our relationship and kind of bringing us together. (Faculty #3, interview, November 17th, 2020)

This sentiment reveals a time when the inability to be physically present due to Covid-19 restrictions hindered the growth of relationships.

Faculty #4 presents the PRHS pre-Covid-19 school culture as rooted in relationships describing:

> Small group with 6 or 7 students sit around a circle with an adult from the building. . . creating space for relationships to foster through campus ministry retreats or Friday

> night revisions and Kairos retreats with adults forming pretty incredible bonds. . . or like a sports banquet where families and teams come together to recognize the hard work from a past season. . . intentional about relationships, the way we are, I think it feels just feels a little different, a little bit more like a family. (Faculty #4, interview, November 18th, 2020)

Faculty #4 provides examples of how the school culture is developed, shared, and promoted at PRHS describing examples as small groups, Friday night revisions, kairos retreats, and sports banquets built into the school culture to purposely develop trusting student-faculty relationships. As the Friday revisions and kairos retreats are held virtually this year for each grade level, small groups are the missing feature, removed from schedules due to Covid-19, forcing students and adults to miss a critical opportunity to develop lasting relationships and the feeling of family that is described. Margolius et al (2020) explains as more students are feeling disconnected from their communities during Covid-19 with less time each day set aside for school assignments a vast amount of scholars are feeling isolated and neglected from the proper care from adult interaction. Faculty #13 contributes:

> I have been part of virtual retreats. Yesterday we had our grade level team retreat, just feeling connected to the people who you're working with and who are working with the same students. It's hard. Sometimes you can feel very isolated while virtual is going on.

These comments seem to provide evidence Faculty #13 was able to feel a sense of belonging to their community, valued during difficult times of pandemic because of the mainstay of faculty retreats. From the perspectives of faculty, exposing the challenges, mainstays, and wins during

the pandemic offered an understanding about the PRHS community impact on the schools culture to promote student-faculty relationships before and during Covid-19.

RQ2: How does one's positionality impact a vision of trust and strong community at the school that works?

This study explores the faculty perspectives to uncover how the school culture at the school that works promotes student-faculty relationships. These perspectives are composed of adults bringing a positionality to the school setting that serves this school community. As Gerald (2006) described school culture as a "flow of feelings and folkways wending its way within the school," PRHS finds its own identity and flow of feelings through its mission to establish " . . . a Catholic school for all faiths. . . that nurtures and challenges young people. . . learn to love others. . . serve the common good" as its calling to drive the school mission of serving others (PRHS Mission Statement, 2021). This mission in the culture is evident in the ICF with building relationships atop of Tier 1. The ILT refers to the building relationships principle at the forefront stating "Anytime you bring people together in a space, you have to work on relationships and understand each other, if anything else is going to happen" (ILT, interview, January 19th, 2021). Without establishing relationships how can community members trust an institution to carry out the mission of the organization? Therefore in other words, to lead by fostering relational trust in the school culture, building and sustaining relationships need to be the utmost priority to support institutions in carrying out its calling, duties, and responsibilities in its community.

The school culture at PRHS is vital to the identity of the school community as it pulls from its inherent values of "Hope, Love, Trust, Community. . ." (PRHS Value Statements, 2019) influencing current and future relationships. The folkways wending their way through the school

are also the voices of faculty who reflect on the school culture in the form of "vision and values, beliefs and assumptions, history and stories," described by Gerald (2006). These elements from the values, beliefs, and attitudes can ultimately develop a sense of belonging through trusting student-faculty relationships influencing holistic and academic success for community stakeholders.

Hiring Culture. The PRHS hiring process invites people to become members and influence the learning community. This process has adapted over time into a collaboration effort of students and faculty teaming together to engage in discussion with potential candidates ultimately to find the best candidate that fits the culture. The process plays out in steps as open positions are posted in community networks where potential candidates are able to apply then screened by department leaders. An onboarding team is established per position needs to have members involved that would have a non direct or direct working relationship including students with a candidate and members that would support in developing the candidates role. Then, the onboarding team conducts a group interview with discussion questions created by the onboarding team aligned with the role, values, culture, and mission of PRHS which then candidate interview is discussed amongst the team. The next step could look like a demo lesson or another group interview, this time with students facilitating a discussion to connect and learn more about the candidate and shared with the onboarding team. If the candidate is a likely hire, which is an informed decision made by the principal and onboarding team from the data gathered, the last step before being offered the position is a meet with the school president.

The people in the community play a large role in the success of this environment of learning and nurturing young people to serve the common good. This dynamic of who is brought

or hired into the community has a profound impact on the success of those served because they bring a background employing their positionality. Hiring the wrong people can have a negative effect on the school culture and lead to relationships breakdown, distrust, and faculty turnover. Also, hiring the right people contributes to the success of the school learning as relationships and school culture flourish. The faculty share their own stories of the hiring culture at PRHS and the impact of positionality at play factoring into trust in the community.

PRHS has been open for ten years (est. 2011), most faculty have less than 5 years experience in their current role and are mostly 30 or under, according to the participant survey, pointing to evidence of PRHS upholding a practice of hiring mostly younger, culturally inexperienced, and majority white faculty. Research by Milner et al (2013) states “white teachers and students of color possess different racialized and cultural experiences and repertoires of knowledge and knowing, both inside and outside the classroom, racial and cultural incongruence may serve as a roadblock for academic and social success in the classroom” (p. 236). A bridge to reducing this gap according to Ladson-Billings (1995) is the need to develop cultural knowledge amongst stakeholders, more specifically teachers and students. Cultural knowledge is described by Milner et al. (2013) as teachers and students' experiences from their background that is directly related to identity which involves race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion (p. 238). The school community would benefit from professional development incorporating tools to advance cultural knowledge just the same as schools develop content knowledge. Faculty #9 shares, “Don't always know if the team's voice has agency in identifying a team culture, there’s a high level of turnover as a result of that. . . I think we try to hire for culture over capability” (Faculty #9, interview, December 7th, 2020). Faculty #9 describes a team culture where at times

is lacking agency in what a team culture is leading to a high faculty turnover. When faculty input is lacking in the aspect of culture, faculty could feel disconnected, leaving the school for employment elsewhere.

Another avenue to reducing the cultural inexperience gap is leadership implementation of strategic hiring and practices to attract and hire a diverse range of faculty is important for the school culture. Teachers of color have the opportunity to showcase more than the typical teacher responsibilities (Griffin & Tackie, 2006) as role models, parental figures, and advocates; they can build relationships with students of color that help those students feel connected to their schools. Similarly, Di Angelo (2018) contributes this to preserving white institutional power and authority which whites are inevitably socialized into this system and gain privilege, as a benefit, whether it is warranted or not, from their dominant group. This is evidence of ways that foster systemic issues in education.

Faculty #4 states more about the hiring culture and leadership, “One of the most important things that the principal does is hire people because the people in the culture have to be committed to trust. . .” (Faculty #4, interview, November 18th, 2020). The Principal’s leadership role in attracting, hiring, developing, supporting, and keeping strong people (Bryk & Schneider, 2004) impacts the formation of relation trust in relationships within the school culture. Faculty #4 continues, “. . . leadership's job is bringing in the right people to work with our students and continue to build on our culture” (Faculty #4, interview, November 18th, 2020). Hiring unmotivated people (Sinek, 2009) and not people who are already motivated is related to hiring the wrong people and won’t get the needle moving. Briscoe, Khalifa, & Okilwa (2017) best illustrate the importance of forming relationships through learning cultural competence not

just by hiring the right people but going beyond this scope with discussions and professional development about race, racism, and culturally responsive pedagogy. Continuous hiring of the wrong people fosters high faculty turnover which leads to distrust in leadership rippling down to the school culture.

Faculty #6 shares:

> Longevity of relationships. I think it's easier for adults to trust each other and leadership and the school when they see their coworkers sticking around so that you look and see that person has a good long-term relationship with the school. And, you know, it seems like a place that I would want to trust. . . I think that transfers to students as well. If they see this person, my teacher or a teacher from a different grade, I see them around and I know that they're going to be around even after I'm gone. (Faculty #6, interview, November 20th, 2020)

They reveal healthy relationships developed for students and faculty by retaining faculty as an indicator to leadership building trust in the community. Faculty #6 also continues sharing about their position change to leadership and their positionality:

> I recognize that I am, I don't live in nor am I of the same racial or ethnic background as our students. And so even though I want to be here and I think I'm doing a good job, I also recognize the impact of having yet another white person in leadership is not necessarily where we want to be. I am proud that I'm a woman in leadership and there are a lot of women leading the school that I think is important for our female students to see. But again, not a woman of color, which is an issue. (Faculty #6, interview, November 20th, 2020)

These sentiments reveal ownership of one's positionality of privilege and identity at conflict. Faculty #6 promote the principle importance of hiring women and people of color in leadership roles but acknowledge their own racial identity as a roadblock for women of color.

Hiring discrepancy of people of color in institutions across this nation continues to allow one's positionality in the power structure to dominate what voices are being heard and whose stories are being reflected which influences the school community.

Hooks (1999) shares:

> Civil rights struggle led to new ways of knowing and those ways of knowing were systematically ignored by elites within the power structure, it became evident that the root of white supremacy was not ignorance but the desire on the part of unenlightened white people to maintain their dominance over black people in this nation and around the world. (p.1)

Bell Hooks reflection on white supremacy provides context to a power dynamic and structure still in place that has not changed.

Faculty #6 continues by adding their experience with getting hired at PRHS:

> Applied to "the school that works" because I knew people here. I was very excited by the energy of the school. Did not think that they would take me on as a teacher because I was, did not have much experience at all, but ended up here and I fell in love with teaching. And I can't say if it's because of this particular school, if it was my coworkers, if it was like the students, but it captured me - this fits our culture but does not match representation. (Faculty #6, interview, November 20th, 2020)

This testimony seems to provide evidence understanding the differences in demographics amongst faculty and the cultural mismatch supporting systemic structures. This aligns with the evidence shared of the lack of people of color in faculty representation at PRHS. This leads to most narratives of the dominant culture having an abundance of agency in what is best for the "the school that works".

Faculty #7 share a story about position changes within the school having an impact on the community:

> Having held a couple different positions now here . . . but I think speaking more specifically to the old position, I think that when you hold a particular position and are particularly the person of color . . . you carry a larger burden to help generate community within the school. (Faculty #7, interview, November 20th, 2020)

Faculty #7 comments indicate the unfair practice of unbalanced responsibility as a burden for people of color. The position change also was a shift in the culture with the community as Faculty #7 was in a predominant role to influence the schools attitudes, beliefs, and values then moved to a different role with way less exposure.

Faculty #4 states, "If the wrong people are a part of the culture, trust is going to break down and we've, witnessed that" (Faculty #4, interview, November 18th, 2020). Faculty #4 is referencing the removal of faculty deemed the wrong people and not a cultural fit. Faculty #4 comments on hiring the wrong people in the culture leads to trust breaking down is evidence that trust has a major role in the culture and hiring process. The aspect of hiring culture as a theme connected to the thoughts of trust, identity, and community all impacted by one's positionality influenced trust and the cultivating of a strong community.

Inclusion. The final section will describe a theme of inclusion as an integral dynamic to the manifestation of school culture at PRHS. One can beg the question from the social constraints: How inclusive is the PRHS community? Inclusion is important to identity, especially folks who identify as gender and sexual minority members of the community. Studies reveal high levels of suicidal ideation, rejection, and harassment when a negative non-inclusion culture is prevalent in gender and sexual minority groups (Page, 2016, p.678). Riley (2014) states schools need to create a sense of belonging where you can be confident, valued, fit in, feel safe in your identity, and feel at home. Additionally, in this segment the components of a need for a sense of belonging and the need to feel included are revealed from the depositions of faculty as a part of one's identity within a community. Analyzing the different adult positionalities influencing the school that works are examined through faculty perspectives uncovering proponents of inclusion.

Including diverse groups by creating a safe space where all: students, faculty, and staff feel cared for, valued, respected, heard, and accepted by their community empowers marginalized voices in the stories told that have been silenced. The investigation of the faculty dispositions within the 3 departments: Dean's Office, Administration (Leadership) Team, and Academic (Teachers) Team by analyzing this qualitative data can assist in determining the faculty positionalities impact on formulating trust and community with the school culture. Faculty #1 identifies what a vision of strong community looks like in a school culture:

> Strong community is a community with a higher level of psychological safety for the adults because they are the caretakers in the building. And a strong community is also a welcoming, inclusive environment provided for the students and families where they feel accepted, respected, valued, their voices heard and, and courage to participate.

> (Faculty #1, interview, November 16th, 2020)

Then, Faculty #9 reflected on school culture as:

> I don't think we are willing to sit in honest conversations at times. . . Culture is one that wants to be founded on community and wants to be founded on the sense of togetherness, but I don't always see us prioritizing that in decision-making that has a lasting effect felt by the team itself. . . I see leadership identifying what's best for the team. . . (Faculty #9, interview, December 7th, 2020)

These sentiments suggest the opposite vision of what a strong community Faculty #1 refers to. Faculty #9 describes an element of inclusion missing since it is rooted by the power dynamic of leadership determining what is best for the school culture. For the foundational necessities to fulfill a strong community Schaps (2003) states there must be a sense of safety, belogning, autonomy, connectedness, and competence. Faculty #9 reveals this aspect of leadership not inclined to having authentic discussions as a leading factor affecting outcomes in team culture. This element of not being included in determining what is best for the team leads to discouragement of feeling being unheard, devalued, disrespected, and not fully accepted in the togetherness of the community.

Faculty #1 continues to provide examples of what a feeling of value at PRHS looks like:

> Students feel loved. . . number one is to love the students and let them know, not just love them in a different way, but let the students know and feel that they are loved. . . caring for young people. . . providing a safe space. . . (Faculty #1, interview, November 16th, 2020)

The sentiments of Faculty #1 relinquish the value of caring by letting the students know you love them and they feel loved creates a safe trusting space in the school community. Milner (2017) explains the importance of administrators building a culture of love, anti-hate, and liberation with commitment and support from those in positions to make decisions as a way to bolster student-faculty relationships. This is demonstrated through the lens of Faculty #1 as they express the value of creating a safe space where students and faculty in the school community feel loved and supported, and a school community seeking to move forward by breaking the chains of inequality by challenging systemic forms of oppression.

Faculty #1 continues:

> . . . the student is at the center of the mission. . . provide opportunities in education to break the inequalities and the trajectory of young people who may be vulnerable to all the different forms of oppression. (Faculty #1, interview, November 16th, 2020)

Faculty #1 continues, expressing the significance of breaking the inequalities for those who may be vulnerable to forms of oppression which Milner (2017) describes as critical to building citizenship that allows us to take forward steps toward equity. Forming a school culture that is socially conscious can send a powerful message to the school community therefore encouraging student-faculty relationships to develop and understand each other's cultural identity.

Faculty #10 shared in their narrative reflection about development of a positional stance:

> As a white family, like we were in the minority, which was super interesting. And like I grew up going to CYO basketball games and like, I'm the big fan boy of all these kids that were mostly young black teenagers playing CYO. Now I'm a little white boy cheering them on. And like my babysitters growing up were always these, you know,

> inner city of modest economic means black kids who were my babysitters. Kids, my parents got from the parish. (Faculty #10, narrative reflection, December 12th, 2020)

Faculty #10's narrative background provides context to how one perceives their community, cultural knowledge development, and the impact of racial class being associated with this community. These comments indicate that since Faculty #10's white family lived in a racially diverse neighborhood with less white families, they were considered the minority. However, this perception also provides context to the notion of cultural knowledge development as Faculty #10 was exposed to other cultural norms in their community. Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017) refer to the culture norms to the class we are born into, and this ensures that we will be most comfortable in and surround ourselves with people who share our class culture.

Faculty #12 describes trust within the community from their perspective:

> There's not a whole lot of teachers of color or black teachers that I naturally gravitate to, just something that is the connection that I have with teachers of color and black teachers just easier to talk to them about certain things and it's just not there. It is challenging to trust teachers who are not black or of color, because our experiences aren't the same. So they don't always understand where I'm coming from with things or if our understanding of life is quite different if that makes any sense. And it's hard for me to trust them initially. (Faculty #12, interview, December 9th, 2020)

Faculty #12 comments provided evidence of how positionality impacts a vision of trust and strong community. They share from their positionality suggesting a missing component is more teacher of color representation and posing this to a challenge to trust, connection and identify a sense of belonging because of different experiences when this is lacking. A challenge of not

having adequate representation of people of color leads to the feeling of isolation and unconnectedness causing faculty to find other employment. Leadership valuing relationships with people of color to better understand (Griffin & Tackie, 2016) their unique experiences and perspectives keeps faculty from leaving positions.

Faculty #13 describes their experience within the community:

> I didn't feel like I could be my full self in my own experience at Catholic school. I want to have those good things, my hope is that if that is someone's experience and like full self, that they don't feel like they have to hide that. . . Like, I didn't know if that was going to be, I was like, am I going to like lose my job if, and then I looked around and I was like, Oh, wait, We're good here. And felt so much support. And that's how I feel . . . (Faculty #13, narrative reflection, December 17th, 2020)

Faculty #13 experience of not being able to be their full self then feeling comfortable enough to view the surrounding culture as an open door at PRHS to support and value by celebrating one's identity. This empowers faculty to be their authentic selves shapes the culture of the school as supporting inclusion to promote trust and a strong community. However, this is not true for all faculty since culture is not singular and so not necessarily all faculty are empowered, just like not all students are empowered by the status quo. Faculty #13 continues stating, "So that's my hope. That's when I realized, I can also be this for students. And I realized that as I share that about my identity with students, more students come up to me and they just feel a connection or they feel like they can talk to me (Faculty #13, narrative reflection, December 17th, 2020). This is evidence Faculty #13 imposes their positionality to foster change and supports students to explore and be proud of their own identity. This is important to the change needed in institutions

to be advocates in social justice and Faculty #13 indicates the characteristics of political agency. Seider & Graves (2020) explain political agency as the belief one can affect social or political change would be determined by understanding one's own identity in impacting the change to come. To confront inequities in education, social justice practices of exploring one's identity of who you are, becoming, and what you want to become are fundamental aspects to developing social action amongst students and faculty. The conversations and narratives from the perceptions of faculty on inclusion as a theme connected to the thoughts of trust, identity, and community all impacted by one's positionality influenced trust and the cultivating of a strong community.

Conclusion

The results of the findings confirm the faculty member's perspective on promotion of school culture while also revealing what enhances this through literature themes of trust, identity, and community. The patterns which develop highlight their results and cast light on the gaps in the school culture showcasing what is missing to build student-faculty relationships. This also uncovers that there is no one definition of school culture as it is expanded and contracted by the multiplicity and complex social dynamics of a school organization. From conversations and reflections from participants the patterns of agency, hiring culture, challenges of Covid-19, and inclusion - discover insight into the relationships at PRHS. Faculty at PRHS recognize that building relationships with students and each other is important in supporting the overall mission and success of the school culture.

In conversations the voices of faculty reveal what is in the school culture at PRHS sharing key characteristics of family, love, support, risk taking, connectedness and togetherness,

and autonomy. The study participants inform us of the benefits of having agency amongst students, faculty, and leadership in the school culture. Having agency of student and faculty voices in what's best for them contributes valuable elements to the school culture. When agency is missing it opens the door to distrust amongst stakeholders leading to a breakdown in communication fracturing relationships. Agency has a profound impact on the development of pedagogical practices and cultural knowledge supporting collective empowerment for academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995) when young people have a say in their learning experience. When young people have agency they bring their histories and day-to-day life experiences (Riley, 2016) which is fostered by their identity, to the community shaping a sense of belonging. Providing agency that is reflective of one's identity as a feature in decision making that affects stakeholders, creates trust and community, allowing more voices to be heard for a better understanding of leadership's ability to advance the culture and mission of the school by nurturing these relationships.

Since early in 2020 school institutions worldwide have been impacted by challenges of Covid-19. Covid-19 has fostered many challenges to the PRHS community which is reflected in the testimonies of the faculty as a concern influencing relationships in the school culture. New faculty had limited exposure to certain elements of the school culture such as small group, house, sporting events, and daily experiences in common spaces since they were not able to be physically together in the school building, relying on developing relationships virtually. School community building traditions that were able to be performed virtually such as Friday assemblies and virtual retreats led by Campus Ministry were important opportunities in creating new and bolstering existing relationships in the school community. Faculty reported missing moments that

you could not have virtually such as greeting students in the hallways and other common spaces in the school. When faculty and students are unable to be together and neglect interacting, factors such as disconnectedness, isolation, or loss of sense of belonging (Margolius et al, 2020) had an impact on human relational growth and academic success.

The interview data also highlight the culture developed by hiring culture. Faculty describe a practice of employing members of the community by hiring for culture over capability as a means to foster a healthy school culture. Also it was revealed when a moment this hiring for culture component was tested when a relationship with a new hire brokedown as trust in culture diminished leading to distrust in the school culture and the removal of these faculty members. They shared the need for leadership in having an important responsibility of attracting and supporting faculty by hiring the right people, to reduce a high faculty turnover ratio and reestablish trusting relationships. Leadership has an important responsibility of hiring the right people but 85% (PRHS Middle States Team, 2019) of faculty are white which is not representation of the community served in Philadelphia. Hiring from community networks is a practice PRHS also fosters. There is the recognized need to expand networks that are more representative of the student body and community served, as a way to bring diverse positionalities, is an important element to add. This would continue to bridge any disconnect in understanding one another's values, beliefs, and customs to further shape a positive culture. Leadership has an important responsibility of hiring the right to since most are white faculty members (85%, PRHS Middle States Team, 2019). We find that the building of relationships between students and faculty is important in the school culture as a key way to the success of a school entity to carry its mission.

Inclusion was another pattern identified from the qualitative data as an aspect having a major impact on PRHS development of relationships and perceived community. Visions of inclusion such as the feeling of value, care and love, respect, and being heard were all characteristics of what this looks like in a school community. Faculty felt supported with how they identify which empowered faculty to be open and share their story to support students with being comfortable to share how they might identify. One's positionality development was shared as a way how they perceived the community they grew up in and the community they currently live in to make sense of how and why they foster relationships at PRHS. Another factor identified was with faculty of color missing the feeling of a sense of belonging since there are not many faculty who are people of color to create a disconnection to the faculty community and can lead to turnover.

But as the study participants and literature inform us, there are many layers to the school culture when building powerful relationships on a daily basis. This study reveals the many ways this school can engage in CRT and continue to grow in their faculty and staff relationships which will only strengthen the culture. Thirteen interviews and narrative reflections from PRHS faculty provided an in-depth narrative of their experiences in the school culture with building relationships and insight on how they perceive community. The literature themes of trust, identity, and community were found throughout all conversations. These themes interact with one another with the patterns of agency, Covid-19 challenges, hiring culture, and inclusion arose during the faculty interactions having a tremendous impact on relationships in the school community.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Results

Chapter Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the stories from faculty through their experiences to better understand the PRHS school culture of building relationships. To inform this research investigation, evidence was gathered through a three step process: administering a survey, conducting semi-structured interviews, and the co-construction of narrative reflections. From the data collected, 13 faculty shared stories revealing an understanding of the importance of relationship building as an aspect in culture growth through empowering agency, autonomy, support, genuine love for one another, traditions and events, feeling of family, and belonging which upholds the mission and values of PRHS. Through the researched framework lens of critical race theory and concepts of critical consciousness supported by literature based themes of trust, identity, and community, the faculty experiences were analyzed. This process unpacks the impact of positionality recognizing systemic power structures hindering the growth needed to support elements of school culture development. Faculty moments revealed social justice issues such as the lack of faculty agency and the need for more amongst stakeholders, a racial/ethnicity disproportion with faculty and leadership personnel, faculty of color inclusivity, faculty retention, and challenges of Covid-19. Through the triangulation of qualitative data, major findings are identified in the study and included in this chapter discussion. The chapter includes a paradigm relating to relational and community development in addition to offering implications at the classroom, school, and network level for research and practice, then provides limitations and concluding considerations.

Implications at the Classroom Level.

One explanation to narrowing opportunities in student-faculty relationships is to expand positionalities. The student body served is 99% people of color. These relationships in the school culture are impacted by faculty at PRHS having advanced degrees (Masters and up, 66%), mostly white (85%), are in a younger age range (21-30 years old, 53%), and less experienced in their roles (1-5 years, 78%) but capable of educating and reform leads to the need for growth in cultural knowledge. Faculty who are considered younger and less experienced could be more responsive to students since closer to age can develop relationships through establishing events such as music listening sessions, film nights, open mic nights as a way to growing community.

These disparities also illuminate a dynamic and racialized way a school organization can control the narrative of what is best for students, families, and the community. Developing culturally relevant pedagogy practices that relate to the identity and community of the people served, is a shared team responsibility reflected on the practitioner and academic leadership. Through professional development faculty need to be supported with innovative ways to not only focus on content knowledge but also foster cultural knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 1998) to empower student agency with student centered learning activities designed into the curriculum. Through cultural knowledge, establishing cultural competence (Ladson-Billings, 1995) is the means to understanding the aspects of the community culture served. This will provide the ability to relate and communicate effectively in the advancement of student success within the school culture.

Having high levels of critical consciousness can benefit both students and faculty in further erasing racial disparities and systems of oppression by dismantling relationship barriers.

Seider & Graves (2020) elaborate on this importance suggesting critical consciousness can replace marginalized adolescents' feelings of isolation and self-blame for challenges they are encountering with a sense of agency and engagement in a broader collective struggle for justice.

Creating an evidence based unit plan with student agency within the curriculum focused on identifying and dismantling systems of oppression in their communities fosters critical thinking as vital to faculty and students learning to become agents of change. This promotes trust and community in student-faculty relationships, strengthening the school culture as this relation forms an understanding and connection to one another as bonds (Yosso, 2006) form and cultural positions are broadened. Equipped with the awareness and tools starting in the 9th grade of high school allows one the ability to identify and analyze forms of oppression early on, further advancing in leadership, self esteem, motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. Importantly, the more opportunity to think critically about the systemic structural barriers impacting marginalized groups affords a better understanding for those to actively engage in social action.

To deconstruct systemic structural barriers, social justice activism (Seider & Graves, 2020) promotes civic engagement, educational achievement in areas of law & policy, and investment opportunities with the establishment of minority owned businesses to contend wealth inequalities. As we continue as the school that works and the alignment of our mission of students are not the problem but the mission, we could continue this work in the classroom. Seider & Graves (2020) conducted five school studies comparing the critical consciousness development of youth in high school and pedagogical practices during a four year span. In the study, they expand on investigated results concluding with teaching tools that are highly

effective: youth teaching youth, opportunities to effect social change, real-world assignments, and teachers getting personal (Seider & Graves, 2020). From their work on critical consciousness development and pedagogical best practices an action plan (Table 6) at PRHS to create spaces needed to deploy these tools looks like:

Table 6
Action Plan: Cultural Knowledge Faculty Development

Objective: PRHS will be able to broaden their perspectives by building trusting relationships and community				
Strategy #1: Faculty will demonstrate their growth in cultural knowledge content by creating a unit plan				
Action Step	Person(s)/ Group(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion	Resources Needed	Indicators of Success
1. The Instructional Leadership Team will research experts in culturally relevant pedagogy practices for professional development opportunities and select an expert for September 2021 Teacher Professional Development Day.	Instructional Leadership Team	Prior Summer	Collaboration of Instructional Leadership Team for time and energy to research.	Experts retained before the beginning of the school year.
2. The Instructional Leadership Team will design Teacher Professional Development Day opportunity for expert to share best practices in developing culturally relevant pedagogy for unit plan design with all teachers.	Instructional Leadership Team	Beginning of School Year	Dedicated research time for Instructional Leadership Team. Possible finances for expert materials, programs related to professional development.	Teacher Professional Development Day experienced before the beginning of the school year.

3. Instructional Leadership Team will designate each content team leader to lead in team collaboration and co-construction of a culturally relevant unit plan that demonstrates pedagogical practices.	Instructional Leadership Team/ Content Team Leader	Beginning of School Year Content teams will use monthly meeting time and any individual time needed to create a unit plan for implementation during the second semester.	Dedicated planning time for content teams.	Finalized professional development plan ready to present to faculty the following summer for the social studies team.
4. Instructional Leadership Team will designate each content team leader to lead in team collaboration and co-construction of a culturally relevant unit plan that demonstrates pedagogical practices.	Instructional Leadership Team/ Content Team Leader	Beginning of School Year Content teams will use monthly meeting time and any individual time needed to create a unit plan for implementation during the second semester.	Dedicated planning time for content teams.	Finalized professional development plan ready to present to faculty the following summer for the social studies team.

To further develop alignment with critical consciousness and cultural pedagogical practices Ladson-Billings (1995) shares an example of culturally relevant practices in action when employed creates social action furthing enhancing the student and faculty experience. Ladson-Billings (1995) shares:

> In the classrooms of culturally relevant teachers, students are expected to "engage the world and others critically." Rather than merely bemoan the fact that their textbooks were out of date, several of the teachers in the study, in conjunction with their students, critiqued the knowledge represented in the textbooks, and the system of inequitable funding that allowed middle-class students to have newer texts. They wrote letters to the editor of the situation. The teachers also brought in articles and papers that represented counter knowledge to help the students develop multiple perspectives on a variety of social and historical phenomena. (p.161)

This collaborative effort between students and teachers provided an opportunity for their school community to not only develop critical thinking skills but also fostered a path to exposing a social justice issue in education. Then, this partnership and support brought upon action as the school community created an example of what social change is.

Ladson-Billings (1995) shaped ideas for a creation of a unit plan (Table 7) which looks like this at PRHS :

Table 7
Action Plan: Cultural Knowledge Unit Plan

Objective: PRHS will be able to broaden their perspectives by building trusting relationships and community				
Strategy #2: Teachers and students will facilitate a cultural knowledge content unit plan to increase cultural competence for critical consciousness development				
Action Step	Person(s)/ Group(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion	Resources Needed	Indicators of Success
1. Collaborate with students to form and understand what social justice is and what actions we can take to confront social justice initiatives. Co-design essential questions and objectives.	Content Teacher/ Students	Mid School Year	Collaboration of Content Teachers and Students for time and energy to research.	Essential questions and objectives co-designed by mid school year.
2. Have students identify a social justice issue in their community related to a content topic.	Content Teacher/ Students	Mid School Year	Dedicated in class planning and design time for students/ content teachers.	Identified social justice issues by mid school year.
3. Have students research and provide primary source documents/people to present, or articles related to the topic and social justice initiative.	Content Teacher/ Students	Mid School Year	Dedicated in class planning and design time for students/ content teachers.	Finalized research and initiative

4. Have students analyze findings and report out to class by creating a documentary, commercial ad, newsletter, or hold a community discussion form to present results. etc.	Content Teacher/ Students	Mid School Year	Dedicated in class planning and design time for students/ content teachers.	Finalized professional development plan ready to present to faculty the following summer for the social studies team.
5. In analysis and presentation platforms students should also focus on next steps with plans for social action such as writing representatives, creating petitions, or taking part in community drives, etc	Content Teacher/ Students Invite Stakeholders	End of School Year	Dedicated in class planning and design time for students/ content teachers.	Presentation to stakeholders or social action plans carried out by the end of the school year.

This will continue to promote student-faculty relationships by demonstrating not only that learning is taking place from content and literacy skills but the learning from and of one another. This is important to the school that works as this adds an intentional layer to students and faculty to trust one another by understanding what is impacting their community and the willingness to work together to do something about it.

To continue bridging the gaps in school culture and building relationships there is a call to grow community with families. Power dynamics and racialized ways of school entities shape what constitutes as a "good" parent and positive parent engagement (Ishimaru, 2020) historically controlled by whiteness. Families typically have the least agency as they are more inclined to rely and be informed by their student of what is happening in the school community as less frequent communication amongst families and the school can hinder relationships in a school culture. To combat this inequality, organizing community amongst families and faculty allows for more opportunity to build relationships and collective power, ultimately families advocating for themselves. Through equitable collaboration (Ishimaru, 2020) with school leadership, educators, and families by shifting the focus to a more responsive balance of agency can change the power dynamic. Originally, at PRHS, a similar parent organization was established and called the ANGELS. Their intentions were to support our students and community but the organization is not composed of the parents or families we serve. Administration recognized this from freedback of community members and rebranded, eliminating the name, and refocusing their great efforts in a new format. Administration teamed together with feedback from families and faculty to develop today's Parent Teacher Organization run and led by parents of PRHS present and former students.

At PRHS this plan has taken action starting with a newly formed Parent Teachers Organization (PTO) created in the summer of 2019. The most recently developed Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) was created with a collaborative approach to family engagement that has become part of the school culture. The PTO has held events at the school for back to school night, pep rallies, pride week, welcoming to parents in admission events, developed and distributed a monthly newsletter. This has supported the growth and trust in the school culture as a needed feature to the community.

To continue the growth of community with families back to school night, academic/behavior concerns, or sporting events can not be the only avenues to building relationships amongst faculty and families. Educators need to partner with families and open the classroom to include them as a member of the learning community. Shifting the power dynamic to meet their needs can empower families benefiting the school environment. This could look like flexible scheduling and offering to teach/host a class, open a speaker series, book club, or potluck social as ways for this relationship to flourish. Families bring with them the power of experiences that go beyond the textbook bringing a wealth of valuable knowledge into our schools.

A partnership approach (Ishimaru, 2020) with the PTO can be an avenue to include parents and families. Ladson-Billings (1995) shares an example through a teacher created program with parents showcasing a skill or craft to students in the classroom. Here is Ladson-Billings (1995) example of a partnership between teachers and parents in action:

> Another way teachers can support cultural competence was demonstrated by Gertrude Winston, a White woman who has taught school for 40 years. 6 Winston worked hard to

> involve parents in her classroom. She created an "artist or craftsperson-in residence" program so that the students could both learn from each other's parents and affirm cultural knowledge. Winston developed a rapport with parents and invited them to come into the classroom for I or 2 hours at a time for a period of 2-4 days. The parents, in consultation with Winston, demonstrated skills upon which Winston later built. (p.161)

A similar partnership plan of action at PRHS with teachers and the PTO would offer opportunities to grow relationships and learning moments to foster a strong community.

A plan of action would be:

Table 8
Action Plan: Partnership with PTO and Families

Objective: PRHS will be able to broaden their perspectives by building trusting relationships and community				
Strategy #3: PTO, grade level team leaders, families, students, and teachers will partner to facilitate learning opportunities demonstrating skills or crafts				
Action Step	Person(s)/ Group(s) Responsible	Timeline for Completion	Resources Needed	Indicators of Success
1. Instructional Leadership Team will partner with PTO, grade level team leaders, and students about hosting an in school forum at each grade level aimed at discussing ideas of how families can be part of students classroom experience and offer sign up opportunities	Instructional Leadership Team/ PTO Grade Level Team Leaders	Prior Summer	Collaboration of Instructional Leadership Team, PTO, students, Grade Level Team Leaders for time and energy to research.	Attended meeting before the beginning of the school year.
2. Grade level leaders will collaborate with PTO and grade level teams to create schedules for during/after school hours and sign up opportunities.	Grade Level Leaders/ PTO Grade Level Team	Beginning of School Year	Dedicated planning and design time for PTO and Grade Level Team	Identified schedule by the beginning of the school year.
3. Grade level team members will host and collaborate with families in showcasing their talents and offerings.	Grade Level Teams/ Families	Beginning of School Year	Dedicated planning and design time for Grade Level Team and Families	Finalized schedule and planned showings
4. Students would report out on their learning for each class hosted by a family.	Content Teacher/ Students	Mid Year and Ongoing	Dedicated in class planning and design time for students/ content teachers.	Opportunity to present learning by the end of the school year.

To conclude implications at the classroom level, implementing cultural pedagogy practices and family collaboration in the classroom is a way to build relationships amongst the different diverse members of the learning community. Cultural pedagogy practices and equitable family collaboration will aid in reshaping the narratives between differences amongst stakeholders providing opportunities to learn more about each other. As the school that works , PRHS, is learning ways, like developing a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), to continue to not only work but learn to work really well as it heads in the direction of change.

Implications at the School Level.

The 9-12 academic grade level teams were a strong indicator of a healthy culture at the school level. They provided the most support as a lifeline to community through interactions amongst faculty meetings virtually during Covid-19 pandemic challenges. Grade level leaders and teams have been a reliable mainstay since the school opening inception with collaboration across the academic, college and career readiness, and counselling departments meeting weekly. During the meetings space is intentionally designed for team building, care for one another, and ultimately discussion to effectively plan and implement intervention strategies and student celebrations to meet the needs of the students and families served. The grade level teams are considered a valuable and significant aspect to the school culture at PRHS.

To advance the school community in the growth in critical consciousness (CC) it is important to explore connections between the existence of critical consciousness in student-faculty relationships through the coding process as an indicator of trust, identity, and community within the relational development. Within this potential for relational development, a mechanism to advance and support the faculty-student relationship and academic instruction

within the school culture, an eclectic *instructional coaching framework* (ICF) was created by the collaborative efforts of the instructional leadership team (ILT). This new coaching instructional model is implemented to conform to the needs of the school community and backed by research based elements of the four domains in the *Danielson Framework* (Danielson, 2021) and the five core propositions from *The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards* (NBPTS, 2021). The coaching instructional framework is utilized to support the growth of teachers in six areas provided in two tier levels: (Tier 1) building relationships and student centered learning, (Tier 2) classroom leadership, teaching for equity, growth mindset, and team & community. In Tier 1, building relationships is at the forefront as trust, identity, and community derive as vital factors in promoting faculty-student relationships in the school culture.

Utilizing the ICF tool is a central component in this study to understanding the impact of faculty-student relationships on the school culture. Cultivating buy-in for faculty would be aligning the mission and why with the elements of building relationships and student centered learning backed by research of trust, identity, and community to build the school culture. Unpacking this with faculty as a collaborative approach and providing faculty the opportunity to share ideas and feedback on the ICF model would enhance the framework and buy-in including more voices. The ICF model could add to future research for the network schools as a framework to coaching faculty and influence future studies on the impact it has on college readiness and the workforce.

The ICF impacts the way we teach and coach at PRHS establishing a shared language for building relationships. The ILT recognizes this importance of building relationships as it is a culminating feature in the framework atop of Tier 1 as priority for faculty to create community in

the school culture. However, Tier 1 - building relationships has explicit elements of cura personalis (the whole person), trust, and community as factors needed to grow relationships but absent is the explicit element of identity. Without identity as a clear core component identified in building relationships, the positionality of others control narratives denying the opportunity and importance for cultural knowledge (Milner et al. 2013) to develop. Inviting guest speakers and experts in the field to partner at assemblies, grade level team meetings, or offering outsourced cultural competence and pedagogy professional development is a path to cultural knowledge growth in the community. This would enhance the school as there would be shared learning moments and the school community would be able to grow together when involved in the same messaging. This would also offer the opportunity for discussion and space to witness the understanding or disconnect of cultural values. Having identity, trust, and community as the featured elements of Tier 1 - building relationships would advance the school culture in relationship development by including identity as a key element. Identity as a featured factor shifts the power dynamic between student-faculty and showcases student value by putting students first and empowers them to share and shape their own narratives manifesting a sense of belonging.

Additionally, the ICF framework is only applied formally to teachers in the academic department and could be utilized in the development of alternative faculty departments as a means to cultivating relationships in the school culture. Expanding the coaching model to other departments that are driven by student interactions would advance relationships amongst leadership groups and community members as a collective shared vision is aligned. In order to do this, adapting the ICF to suit the needs of members in faculty departments would move

synergy between student-faculty relationships in the school culture and throughout the community. For example, the ICF is structured with descriptors that impact teachers in the classroom. The counseling department would look like the ICF model structured with building relationships still in Tier 1, eliminate student centered learning, and add cura personalis. Tier 2 could be restructured to fit the needs of the department with eliminating classroom leadership and teaching for equity but keeping team & community and growth mindset and adding additional descriptors research and developed by the counseling team and instructional leadership team. Other departments would collaborate with the instructional leadership team and will continue this process of creating a vision of trust and strong community, aligning the school values and mission with the ICF model in order to promote student-faculty relationships.

Through the lens of CRT, identifying inequalities is evident to combat oppressive force in school systems dominated by a racial group (Bennett, 2019) that often denies its existence. The racial demographic is disproportionate and not representative of the population served. The composition of the student body (99% people of color) and Philadelphia (64% people of color) compared to the race distribution of total faculty (85% white) is well lopsided. This structural inheritance reflects mostly white positionalities (Yosso, 2006) and the domination of middle to upper class and patriarchal values in such structures imposing whiteness on schooling factors. This domination influences schooling factors such as pedagogy, policies, and hiring practices normalizing and shaping false views and skewing perceptions of the social world and perceptions (Bell, 2019). Leadership has the opportunity to develop cultural competence at the school that works by identifying factors impacting inclusivity and creating actionable measures that support underrepresented groups within the school culture. The balance of equitable

collaboration amongst leadership and the school community to form an equity or justice focused approach (Ishimaru, 2020) to engage faculty and community members not only acknowledges ongoing racial tensions and systemic issues but transforms this dynamic to focus on ways to bolster support and dismantle oppressive means.

It is evident faculty of color were exposed to vulnerabilities such as isolation, carrying racial burden, feeling of working in silos, and misunderstood cultivated in the culture which leads to faculty needing support to not take on the weight of this historic struggle. PRHS is missing interventions or accommodations to counteract this narrative. Faculty and leadership should share this pain and develop social practices to identify sensitive circumstances activated by leadership to combat the feelings of isolation, devalue, discomfort or vulnerability when a lack of relatable faculty representation exists. Leadership partnering with marginalized groups within the school to develop employee resource groups (Collins & Sisco, 2018) can ensure relatable connectedness for underrepresented faculty could create trust, a sense of care & belonging, motivation, and increase productivity. With this agency in place, organizations can then empower a culture promoting recruitment, retention, and longevity furthering team cohesion and student familiarity in building and sustaining meaningful relationships in the school culture.

Implications at the Organizational Level.

Strengthening relationships by establishing a partnership model that co-designs with all stakeholders is a possible way to manifest community collaboration in the culture of the school entity. Stakeholders are more likely to trust and make collective decisions when there is buy-in created (Bryk & Schneider, 2004) by the fostering of relationships within the community. The positionalities and power dynamic in this unique affiliation of the school organization is

structured by a traditional schooling model (Ishimaru, 2020) built on oppressive institutional assumptions and expectations. Prioritizing a shift in the power dynamics of stakeholder relationships by abandoning this systemic model and creating a partnership model with stakeholders as co-designers enhances a school that works to a school that works well. This was a strength at PRHS when constructing a school community based team for accreditation through the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary School. The PRHS Middle States Team reimagined and reconstructed the schools vision and mission statement collaborating for over a year with student leaders, alumni, parents, faculty, leadership, board members, and job partners to gain accreditation and strengthen school learning for families. Semi-Annual community socials as “get to know you” events to share stories, accomplishments, and celebrations provide the opportunity to network with families, faculty, board members, job partners, and donors. These events invigorate trust, expand positionalities, and reinforces the importance of relationships in the PRHS community.

To continue as the school that works aligned with the mission and values, PRHS must continue responding to the identity of students to grow community. Starting in January 2021 a movement known as the student experience program renewal is at the forefront of this partnership model as stakeholders began collaborating on newly formed initiatives leading with the essential question: How do we not only prepare our students to and through college but how do we connect students with rewarding career opportunities? This initiative focuses on: improving student growth in retention, standardized scores (G.P.A., SAT), alignment with college programs,and college graduation rate to enhance future professional skills, career satisfaction, financial security, and to have a positive impact on the world. PRHS has the

potential to lead the network by modeling partnership through the student experience program renewal.

Implications for Future Research.

The school that works is part of a network of 37 schools across the country with the first school opening its doors in 1996. The mission of the network is as follows:

> The network of high schools delivers a career focused, college preparatory education in the Catholic tradition for students with limited economic resources, uniquely integrating rigorous academic curricula with four years of professional work experience and support to and through college. We partner with educators, businesses and communities to enable students to fulfill their aspirations for a lifetime of success. (Network Mission Statement, 2021)

This network mission is focused on providing equitable opportunities to families with a high quality high school education while learning professional skills for preparation for college and beyond. There is potential for further research of structural oppressive systems plaquing educational systems with limited resources and opportunities in the network cities can expand social justice action. The identifying, analyzing, and changing of these very same systems that caused the formation of the network can build discourse nationwide to better understand policies and practices in place.

The further studies of the ICF tier structures and ways to reshape it to fit the needs of each department adopting the ICF could move synergy between student-faculty relationships in the school culture and throughout communities. The ICF can also have an impact on a network model co-designed to foster relationships in the networkschools by adapting it to each school

community to fit coaching and culture development needs. Since we are the school that works, we must continue to listen to the community voices to truly understand and empower the actions needed in deconstructing systemic oppressive forces that marginalize groups. By including underrepresented groups, collective collaboration, agency, and belonging will strengthen the relationships in the community.

Limitations.

A limitation of this study was the confined scope and size due to the expectations of participants. By design, the survey sample size was 32 respondents allowing for the analysis but limiting the agency since it did not include all faculty. A larger sample size with more perspectives from faculty would enhance the qualitative data to inform the research study. Another limitation in this study is the missing voices of students which would strengthen the studies' understanding of relationships in the school community. Without student perspectives the narratives of how relationships impact their story of community in the school culture is untold. The collection of data from students at PRHS and their interpretation of the relationships with faculty could allow for a major perspective to be included in the research study. Also absent are all other stakeholders, the voices of families & parents and the diverse faculty dispositions from the departments of college and career readiness, counselling, work study, development, admissions, campus ministry, transportation, human resources, and business office which would benefit the collective narrative to learning about the relationships within the school culture.

Conclusion.

This study is an avenue to grasping the dynamics of student-faculty relationships in the school culture at PRHS. I sought to better understand what is in the culture at PRHS that

nurtured a healthy school and what causes concern in this school community. Along this research journey, I discovered examples of a family-like setting that upheld school values of love, trust, and community by cultivating a putting others first mentality. Exploring these relationships also provided narratives to issues hampered by barriers restricting agency and faculty development leading to vulnerabilities therefore deflecting a sense of belonging.

This study also reveals an unprecedented pandemic that brought out challenges like the need to rethink community traditions like kairos, retreats, and in person sporting events. This also brought together innovators to reinvent ways to build community and continue learning in this new virtual space through enduring grade level team support, instructional coaching, and virtual Friday assemblies. Yes, there is a large gap between student and faculty demographics including racial identities but embracing and embodying the identities of its families and faculty is a path to a stronger school community that promotes healthy relationships. We learn critical action tends to create a lane to equality and democratic freedoms initiating change agency. We also learn in some situations when we include student-faculty agency that focuses on legitimizing voices and listening to what is being said to learn what is needed then cultural relationships transform to positive outcomes. At PRHS, this is why it is known as the “school that works". Continued growth in building relationships within a school culture will take PRHS from good to great transforming it to be more than a working school. When so, then maybe the next study will be about “a school that works really well”.

Appendix A: Consent For Faculty Interest Survey

I am currently conducting research at Kutztown University as a doctoral candidate in the transformational teaching and learning program. This doctorate is designed for the career educator - the individual who envisions their career as a lifelong practitioner-scholar in their classroom or educational setting, working with children and adults to improve lives. One requirement of this program is to complete a culminating research dissertation. My dissertation proposal would look something like this: How Relationships Impact School Culture at PRHS From Perspectives of Faculty. The ultimate goal of this study is to sustain & improve our school culture.

If you agree to complete this survey, you will be asked 5 questions about your perspective of school culture at PRHS. This survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and will end on Friday 10/15 @ 3pm.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Pseudonyms will be used throughout the study to keep faculty names confidential. All information collected during the course of this study will be kept in a password protected computer and remain confidential amongst the researcher, principal investigator, and Kutztown University for academic research purposes. The research material may be kept for further use in future follow-up studies. There is minimal risk to participate in this study, such as a breach of confidentiality and/or embarrassment since your name is linked to your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Kutztown University is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants like you. The IRB will have access to study information.

Statement of Consent: Completing this survey indicates that you consent to participate in this part of the research project and are open to a follow up interview.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Richman Mathis @ rmathis@PRHS.org

Faculty Interest Survey: Demographics

1. Please list your title
2. Please select your department
    a. Academic
    b. Administration
    c. Dean's Office
    d. Campus Ministry
    e. College Counselling
    f. School Counselling
    g. Work Study
    h. Human Resources
    i. Staff Development

j. Admissions Office
k. Business Office
l. Transportation Department

3. Please select the gender you identify with
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Choose not to answer

4. Please select your range of age
   a. 21-25
   b. 26-30
   c. 31-35
   d. 36-40
   e. 41-up

5. Of the following, how would you describe yourself?
   a. Not Hispanic or Latino
   b. Hispanic or Latino
   c. Ethnicity unknown

6. Of the following, how would you describe yourself?
   a. White
   b. Black
   c. Asian
   d. American Indian/Alaskan Native
   e. Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
   f. Multiple Races

7. Indicate the total years of experience you have in the role you currently serve?

8. Indicate the your highest level of educational achievement
   a. No Degree
   b. Associates
   c. Bachelor's
   d. Bachelor's Plus Hours
   e. Master's Degree
   f. Master's Plus Hours
   g. Doctorate

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Consent Form

I am currently conducting research at Kutztown University as a doctoral candidate in the transformational teaching and learning program. This doctorate is designed for the career educator - the individual who envisions their career as a lifelong practitioner-scholar in their classroom or educational setting, working with children and adults to improve lives. One requirement of this program is to complete a culminating research dissertation. My dissertation proposal would look something like this: How Relationships Impact School Culture at PRHS From Perspectives of Faculty. The ultimate goal of this study is to sustain & improve the school culture.

If you agree to complete this interview, you will be asked 6 questions about your perspective of school culture, trust, and community at PRHS. This interview should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Pseudonyms will be used throughout the study to keep faculty names confidential. All information collected during the course of this study will be kept in a password protected computer and remain confidential amongst the researcher, principal investigator, and Kutztown University for academic research purposes. The research material may be kept for further use in future follow-up studies. There is minimal risk to participate in this study, such as a breach of confidentiality and/or embarrassment since your name is linked to your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Kutztown University is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants like you. The IRB will have access to study information.

Statement of Consent: Completing this interview indicates that you consent to participate in this part of the research project and are open to a follow up interview.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Richman Mathis @ rmathis@PRHS.org

Structured Interview Questions:

1. Can you tell me about the school culture here at PRHS?
2. Can you provide examples of what it looks like at PRHS?
3. How do you foster trust in building relationships at PRHS?
4. Can you tell me what is in a school culture that builds trust?
5. Can you tell me what a vision of a strong community looks like at PRHS?

6. Can you tell me how your own story impacts the school community at PRHS?

Appendix C: Narrative Reflection Prompt

Thank you for taking time to be a participant in this study. By doing a narrative reflection, we are able to gather necessary data that drives our growth and learning in our school community. In order to collect meaningful data, each question was intentionally structured to gain a better understanding of each participant's own story. Please, take the time needed to reflect on your own moments in practice by responding to each question. Feel free to respond in any length you feel is necessary to complete your response.

Kind Regards,
Richman Mathis

1. Provide a detailed narrative about your meaning of trust and what it looks like to you as an educator at the school that works.

    A. Describe a time where you effectively or ineffectively worked with a student at the school that works. Explain if trust in your relationship was a factor.

    B. After this moment, how did the results from this occasion impact the school community?

Appendix D: Principal Consent

[redacted], Principal

July 20th, 2020

[redacted],

I am currently conducting research at Kutztown University as a doctoral candidate in the transformational teaching and learning program. This doctorate is designed for the career educator - the individual who envisions their career as a lifelong practitioner-scholar in their classroom or educational setting, working with children and adults to improve lives. One requirement of this program is to complete a culminating research dissertation. I would like to study *how relationships impact school culture at PRHS from the perspectives of faculty*. I am requesting permission to conduct this study with faculty at PRHS. I will be implementing this study by conducting individual structured interviews, a narrative reflection, and a school wide distribution of a google survey for faculty to complete.

The ultimate goal of this study is to understand and foster healthy relationships in sustaining and improving the school culture at PRHS.

This research will not alter the instruction provided to our students. I will use strict confidentiality in my report and will not mention faculty names, using pseudonyms. Also, this report will only be shared for research purposes. I am available to answer any questions you may have or discuss this further.

By signing below, [redacted] grants access to Richman Mathis to conduct dissertation research within school limits. This letter hereby allows Richman Mathis access to teaching professionals at [redacted], in order to carry out work with the dissertation process.

Sincerely,

Richman Mathis

Instructional Coach, 12th U.S. Government & Politics Teacher

Print Name:_____

Signature of approval: _____

Appendix E: Faculty Consent to Participate

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted through Kutztown University. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study. The University requires that you give your signed agreement if you choose to participate.

This study is being conducted by Richman Mathis II, Teacher at [redacted]

Title of the Study:

The Impact of Relationships on School Culture at From Perspectives of Faculty at a Philadelphia High School

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this research study is to explore the nature of student-faculty relationships at PRHS & the impact they have on the school culture. The significance of this study has the potential to uncover the impact of relationships on school culture. The hope is to benefit our school community by sustaining and improving the school culture at the school that works by exploring relationships.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate in this study, I may request you to participate in an audio-recorded semi-structured interview and respond to a narrative reflection prompt. The interviews of this study will be audio recorded questioning based on relationships & school culture perspectives and will be administered by the researcher. The interviews will take place via Zoom on a pre-chosen date. The interviews will take approximately 30 minutes. The data collected will be used to analyze faculty perspectives on relationships that may impact the school culture.
The narrative reflection writing prompt will read as follows: *Provide a detailed narrative about a moment where you effectively or ineffectively worked with a student at the school that works. After this moment, how did the results from this occasion impact you and/or the school community?*

This narrative reflection was created to engage educators in their positionality. Each prompt response will allow for educators to reflect upon significant moments of teaching in order to uncover essential relationships that may impact school culture.

Risks or Discomforts, and Benefits of Being in the Study:

There is minimal risk to participate in this study. There is a chance for breach of confidentiality with the demographic survey since participants' email address and department are linked to their

responses despite security provisions protecting anonymity. These responses will be gathered and conducted electronically by the researcher. Demographic survey data based on the department could be presented. Identities will be known to the researcher only and kept confidential and secure with security provisions. Participants may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.. There is no compensation or medical treatment for risks or discomfort. To minimize the risk, participant confidentiality will be ensured using pseudonyms during the entire research process including all identities and data collected stored in a password protected computer.

The potential benefits of this study can foster relationships as a forefront and as a critical component of improving school culture, further erasing racial disparities in education. By exploring the impact of student-faculty relationships at [redacted], this can add to current research on the positive factors benefiting school relationships.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Records will be kept private and will be handled in a confidential manner to the extent provided by law. In any report or presentation, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a research study participant. You will remain anonymous.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Richman Mathis II, Teacher, [redacted], rmathis@PRHS.org.

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later regarding the research study, you may contact the researcher listed above. If you have any questions or concerns about the rights of research participants, please contact the IRB Committee at Kutztown University at 484-646-4167.

Compensation:

No compensation for participation in this research study.

Future Research Studies:

Your information collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

Statement of Consent:

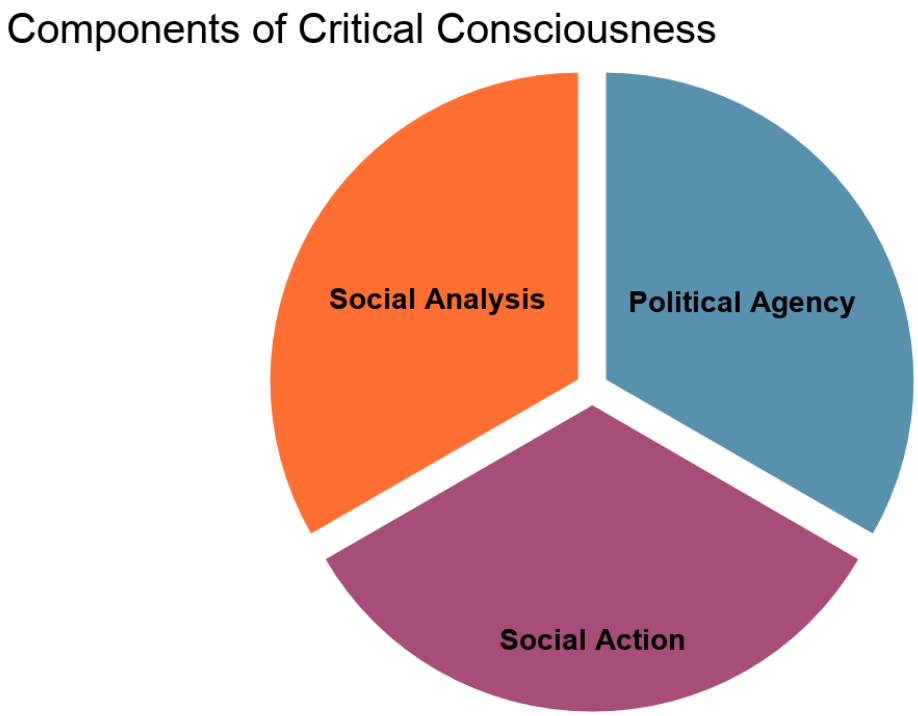
I have read the information described above and have received a copy of this information. I have asked questions I had regarding the research study and have received answers to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and voluntarily consent to participate in this study.

_____

Signature of Participant Date

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix F: Critical Consciousness Model



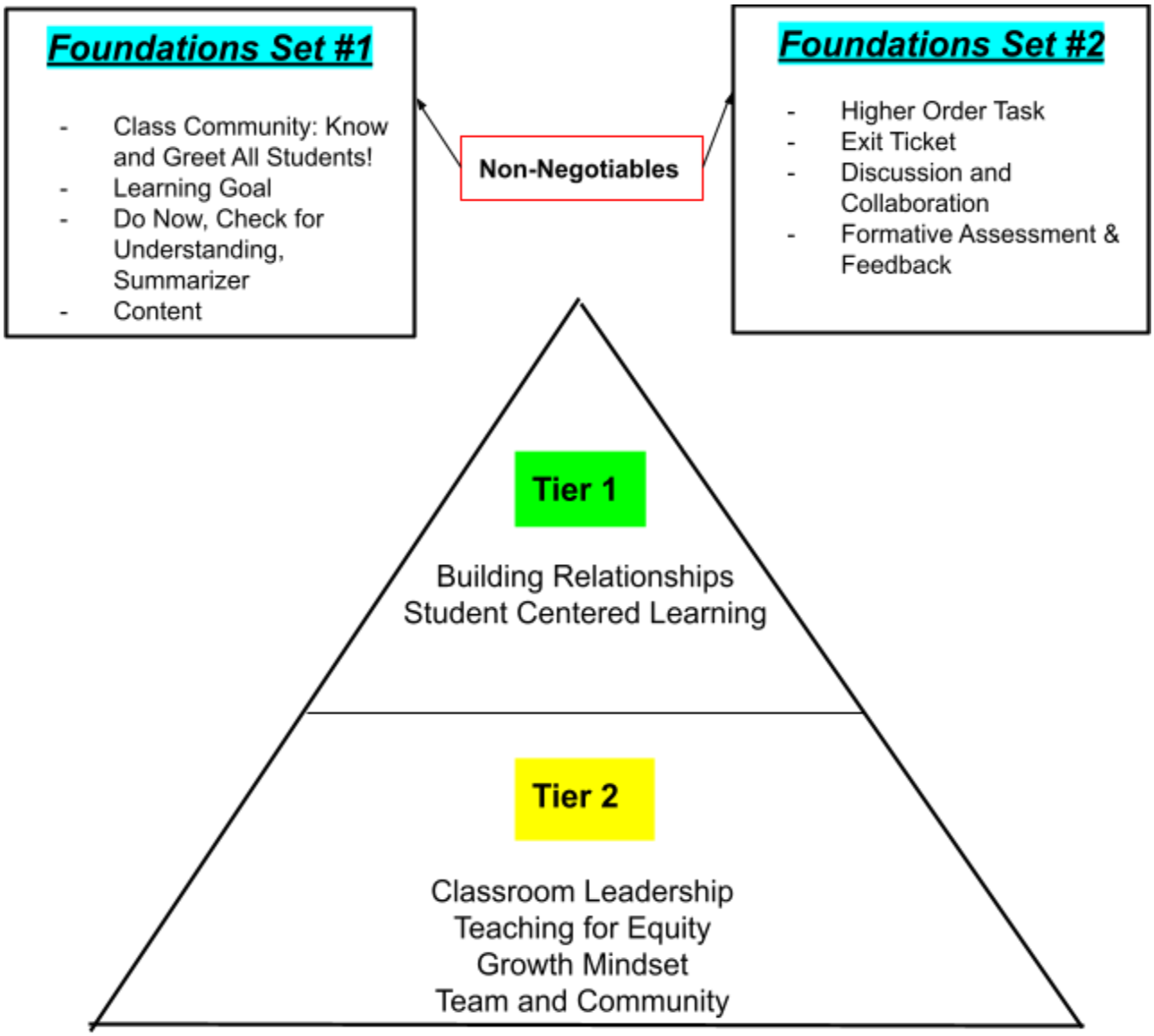
(1) *Social Analysis* refers to the ability to name and analyze the social, political, and economic forces that contribute to inequity and inequality.

(2) *Political Agency* is the belief that one has the capacity to effect social or political change

(3) *Social Action* refers to engaging in events or activities that confront oppressive forces and structures, and the unequal conditions they perpetuate.

Source: Seider, S., & Graves, D. (2020). *Schooling for critical consciousness: Engaging Black and Latinx youth in analyzing, navigating, and challenging racial injustice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press., *(P.4-5).*

Appendix G: Coaching Instructional Framework



Prioritizing: Tier 1 all faculty this year via PD, Tier 2 individually with coaches

Foundations: All are Non-negotiable

**Continue to following pages for further framing of each: Foundation Sets, Tiers 1 & 2*

Foundations

Foundations Set #1 **(All are Non-negotiable)**	**Foundations Set #2** **(All are Non-negotiable)**
→ Create a classroom community. **Know and greet all students!** → **Learning Goal** or standards visible on slides, Google Classroom, etc. Students must know the **WHAT** they will be learning, **HOW** they will be learning, and the **WHY** - the importance or relevance of that learning. CLEAR directions are essential → **Do Nows** (beginning) **CHECKS FOR UNDERSTANDING** (middle) and **Summarizers** (end)	→ Succinct, clear presentation of content → Exit ticket to assess student achievement of the objective(s) for the class → Students regularly engage in higher-order tasks → Regular opportunities for student-student discussion and collaboration → **Formative assessments and feedback**

Tier 1

Building Relationships	**Student Centered Learning**
→ **Cura Personalis** - value each student - student first - foster care, support - invisible backpack - build empathy → **Building Community** - sense of belonging - safe space - seek to learn student (name & story) - celebrate accomplishments → **Trust** - trust first & then develop - not personal - teacher openness, dependable, honesty, understanding, empathy, forgiving	→ **High-Impact Strategies** - instructional core - engagement: curiosity, relevance, purposeful - skill practice: executive, content, literacy → **Voice and Choice** - listening - student roles - space for continued open dialogue, opportunities → **Intentional Planning** - power benchmarks, annual plan, unit plan, lesson plan - foundations → **Assessment and Feedback** - backwards design - reflection, feedback, rubrics - equitable grading practices - maintaining accurate records

Tier 2

Classroom Leadership	Teaching for Equity	Growth Mindset	Team and Community
→ **Create Environment for Learning** - safe space - student/ teacher expectations - agreed upon norms/routines → **Student Buy In** - open communication - negotiables/ non-negotiables - voice & choice - connectedness → **Equity and Empowerment** - teacher-student power dynamic - opportunities	→ **Building Cultural Competence** - develop critical consciousness - self-reflection - co-learning of others - seek to understand cultural values from different perspectives - explore individual identities & cultures - value experiences, space for non academic or implicit learning → **Culturally Sustaining Curriculum** - culturally relevant texts & sources - equitable practices for all students to learn	→ **Self-Care** - screen breaks - work/life balance - creating and maintaining boundaries → **Expanding our Teaching Toolkits** - sharing best practices - conferences - seminars and webinars - professional reading - learning walks → **Expanding Content Knowledge** - professional reading - continuing education → **Utilizing Feedback** - coaching program - video review → **Professional Growth Opportunities** - continuing education - certification programs → **Executive Functioning** - planning and prioritizing - organization - emotional control	→ **Healthy and Productive Teams** - collaboration instead of silos, responsive - support → **Partnership with Families** - engaging and open collaborative communication → **Accountability** - demonstrate & develop responsible actions for growth - self reflective → **Creating Shared Resources** - utilizing google drive → **Communication** - open → **Support for other Teams in the School**

Appendix H: Codebook Example

Deductive Codes	***Literature Themes***
(T) (I) (C)	**Trust** **Identity** **Community**
Tier 1 Principles:	***Description***
Building Relationships (BR)	→ **Cura Personalis:** value each student, student first, foster care, support, invisible backpack, build empathy → **Building Community:** sense of belonging, safe space, seek to learn student (name & story), celebrate accomplishments → **Trust:** trust first & then develop, not personal, teacher openness, dependable, honesty, understanding, empathy, forgiveness
Student Centered Learning (SCL)	→ **High-Impact Strategies:** instructional core, engagement: curiosity, relevance, purposeful, skill practice: executive, content, literacy → **Voice and Choice:** listening, student roles, space for continued open dialogue, opportunities → **Intentional Planning:** power benchmarks, annual plan, unit plan, lesson plan, foundations → **Assessment and Feedback:** backwards design, reflection, feedback, rubrics, equitable grading practices, maintaining accurate records
Tier 2 Principles:	
Classroom Leadership (CL)	→ **Create Environment for Learning:** safe space, student/ teacher expectations, agreed upon norms/routines → **Student Buy In:** open communication, negotiables/non-negotiables, voice & choice, connectedness → **Equity and Empowerment:** teacher-student power dynamic, opportunities
Teaching for Equity (TFE)	→ **Building Cultural Competence:** develop critical consciousness, self-reflection, co-learning of others, seek to understand cultural, values from different perspectives, explore individual identities & cultures, value experiences, space for non academic or implicit learning → **Culturally Sustaining Curriculum:** culturally relevant texts & sources, equitable practices for all students to learn
Growth Mindset (GM)	→ **Self-Care:** screen breaks, work/life balance, creating and maintaining boundaries → **Expanding our Teaching Toolkits:** sharing best practices, conferences, seminars and webinars, professional reading, learning walks → **Expanding Content Knowledge:** professional reading, continuing education → **Utilizing Feedback:** coaching program, video review → **Professional Growth Opportunities:** continuing education, certification programs → **Executive Functioning:** planning and prioritizing, organization, emotional control
Team and Community (TC)	→ **Healthy and Productive Teams:** collaboration instead of silos, responsive , support → **Partnership with Families:** engaging and open collaborative communication → **Accountability:** demonstrate & develop responsible actions for growth, self reflective → **Creating Shared Resources:** utilizing google drive → **Communication:** open → **Support for other Teams in the School**

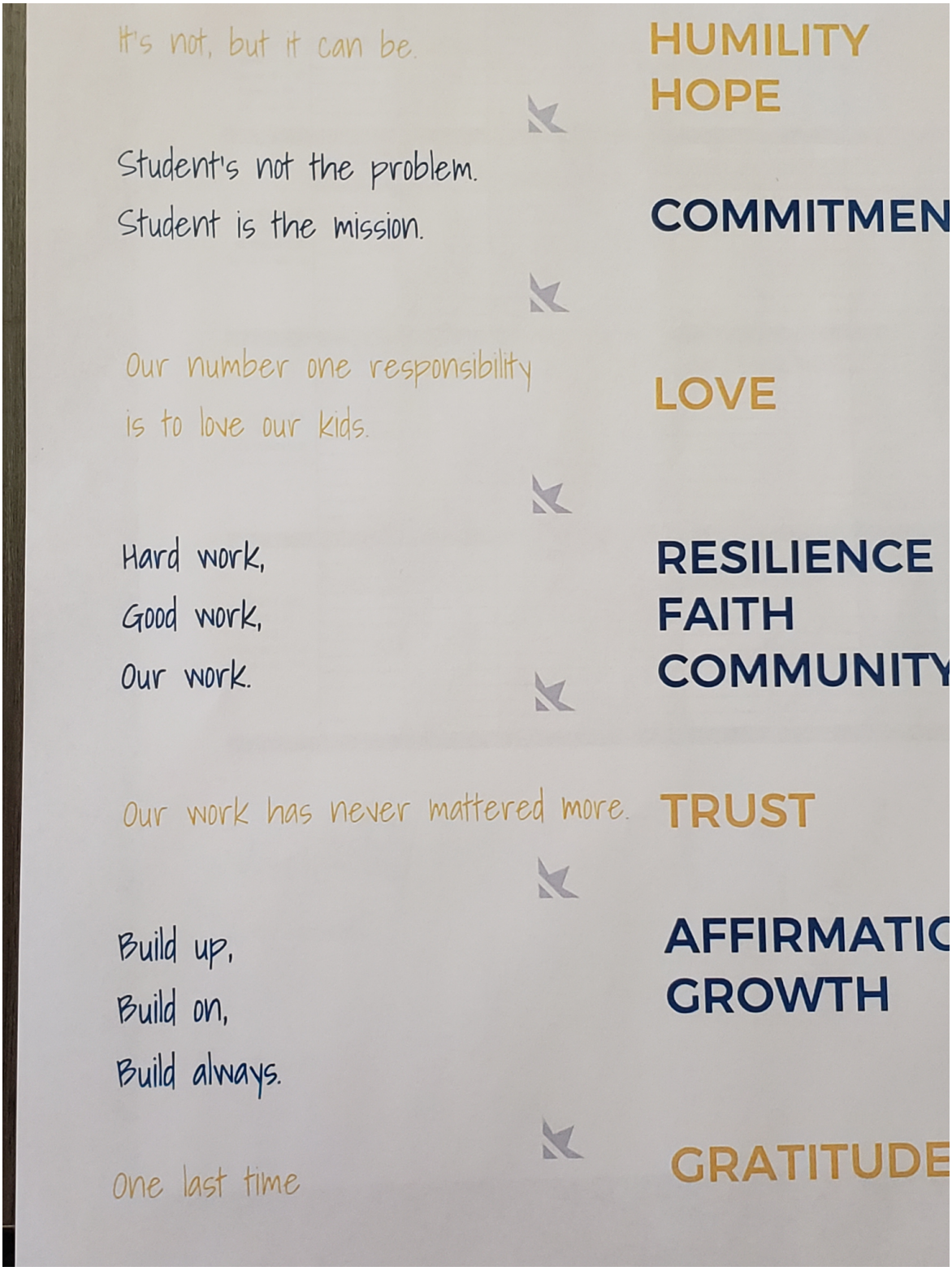
Interview Data	*Cycle 1 & 2: In Vivo & ICF Principles*	*Cycle 3: Lit Themes*	*Researcher Notes*
Interview Q #1: Can you tell me about the school culture here at PRHS? Anything. I mean, I, I think we, we truly aimed to make an atmosphere that feels like family and you know, families who hold each other accountable, have high bars and expectations for one another1. And really like pushing ourselves to the limits that we didn't know2. We had to keep pushing ourselves to find those limits. I know that that's something that I feel like I felt as an adult at our school is like, you know, I've, I've definitely worked in other places before. But I feel like I've grown the most working here because so much is expected of me and just like the general belief that like we can do hard things and we can do different things and new things and take risks3. So I feel like that's something that I've tried to really lean into is how we can work really hard and how we can take these risks to see what comes of those things. And I think like we, we asked her to do the same thing, create an Atmosphere where when we fell, we're there to support one another and help each other4. But because we have that support, I think even kids take more risks and they discover like, not limits to their potential, but like they're more spaces for them to reach to5. And I think a family too, because I mean, realistically we all spend more time at school than we do at home for most of the times6. So I think like this becomes a family because of that. Like we spend a lot of time together. So I think those are big parts of who we are.	1. atmosphere that feels like family - **(BR)** 2. push ourselves to the limits that we didn't know **(GM)** 3. general belief that like we can do hard things **(GM)** 4. support one another and help each other, **(BR)** 5. kids take more risks and they discover like, not limits to their potential**, (BR)** 6. we all spend more time at school than we do at home - **(BR)**	1. C, T 4. C,T 5. T 6. C	Community - Faculty #3 describes an atmosphere where we support one another and work hard to push one another, take risks **(A)** and find limits in a healthy way, This goes for our students as well as Faculty #3 explains encouraging students to take more risks and discover to find their potential They explain how we become family because we spend more time together **Agency Theme? - a risk taking culture**
Interview Q #2: Can you provide examples of what it looks like at PRHS? So what, what it actually look like? So like this isn't, this is the part that I miss too in the virtual world a lot of times, but it looks like standing in the hallway and seeing like 50 kids walk past you smiling saying good morning asking you how you are. Not always just us asking students how they are1. I think it, I can see it when I walk into a classroom and I can see students like tackling new subjects and asking questions instead of not asking questions, that sounds pretty basic, but like, instead of when you don't know something you don't ask for help. So seeing students struggle with things that are hard and asking for support and help like I can see that students want to achieve great things and I can see that teachers are like setting the bar really high2.	1. like standing in the hallway and seeing like 50 kids walk past you smiling saying good morning asking you how you are.**(BR)t** 2. I walk into a classroom and I can see students like tackling new subjects and asking questions instead of instead	1. C, T 3. C 4. C	Faculty #3 reflects on missing in person learning and interactions since we are in a virtual world **(CC)** Student centered learning - Faculty #3 describes seeing student centered learning when they are in the classroom by students asking questions and asking for support Community - They

And then like, I see it at assembly when we're all together and we're doing things that aren't necessarily academics, but kind of focuses on our relationship and kind of bringing us together, whether it's like one of those feel-good assemblies where we're like, you know, learning about something new or if there's assemblies that we're talking about real issues that we need to change. I think those ones are as important as the community builder because you can't like can't work towards the change until you have that trusting relationship3. So I think, I think both of those things, there's times that I see our culture now truly engage and then like seeing kids also help each other, you know, when a senior talks to a freshman instead of like, Oh yeah. When I was a freshman, something blank happened, or this is what I learned, or this is what I wish I would have known. It always amazes me in the summer when we're looking for student volunteers to help with freshmen bootcamp. And like the list of kids is longer to help than we need. And like, kids are just really interested to share their story with, with kids that are younger. And I think that that's like, what good families do like older siblings kind of teach the younger ones, the ropes of what they need to know, you know? But I feel like I see that often.	of not asking questions**(SCL)** 3. assembly when we're all together and we're doing things - **(BR)** 4. That's like, what's good families do like older siblings kind of teach the younger ones-**(SCL)**		also describe assemblies as a way to build community and connectedness through gathering together to build trusting relationships. Faculty #3 reflects on senior students having roles & opportunity to share their story to underclassmen. Also
Interview Q #3: How do you foster trust in building relationships at PRHS? Yeah. I mean, this is so interesting, cause I would probably answer it similar, but very different with the different audiences at school. Building trust with kids is kind of simple. It's starting the relationship being open, being honest, being consistent which I think is true to adults, to my relationship with adults. But you know, words are our words oftentimes and like the reasons why kids walked through my door to talk are very different. Like sometimes because we have that relationship or sometimes they're sent to us because they're upset or something's going on, you know? So I think we build the trust with the students, by being honest, being there for them and then backing up all of my words and the actions consistently. And I think when I'm working with kids, it's easy to be very transparent and very honest and forthcoming1. And then on the flip side, when I'm working with adults, like all those still things like remain true, but we can't always be transparent and honest when it comes to students. Maybe, maybe not, not honest, but like students have the right to privacy. So like in some sense with teachers, like we can't always disclose what kids say because of kids' privacy, but the same things apply to like backing up your words with actions and consistency always. He told me that Sean, actually, I think it was [redacted] always would say like you, you earn trust and drops and then you lose it	1. open, being honest, being consistent - **(BR)** 2. you earn trust in drops and then you lose it in buckets, **(BR)**	1. T 2. T	Trust - Faculty #3 describes again the position they are in and how trust is dependent because with adults they can not reveal student information bc of privacy. But they explain the importance of having relationships is the same with being open, honest, and consistent.

in buckets2. And like that image always kind of stuck true to me or like, it takes many like instances with someone to build trust, whether that's with the students. Like it's not like any magic phrase I'm going to tell, tell the kid is going to make them trust me. But like that consistency of always being there helps build up that trust. But I also have to realize I can lose it like that if I'm not consistent or I'm not transparent or forthcoming with them. And then it takes that much longer to like build up that trust. If that makes sense.			
Interview Q #4: Can you tell me what is in a school culture that could build trust? I think opportunities for relationship building have to be number one. Like it has to be a focus on that everything that we do impacts one another and like back to our basics of like, I truly want you to succeed because when you succeed, I'm also winning. So like, I think that like general foundation of, of that is super important, but then it has to be coupled with like opportunities for people to feel heard and valued1. So if I feel like, you know, I have a trusting relationship with the leadership at my school and I feel like I can go and feel like my voice is heard and valued. I also have to trust that like, those people are making decisions that are best for the overall school. So like that's where the trust comes in, I think. So like when you have that trusting relationship in that like value on community and the value of like everything that we do, I'm kind of all in for, because when you should see them succeeding, but like, I also have to know that, and this is where the trust comes in is like, I don't see all the pieces of the puzzle and like my priorities might not be the overall school priority2. And I have to trust that like my voice was valued and heard and considered in that, but I'm not the person that's making the overall decision because somebody else's is looking at everyone else's voice and priorities and trying to make the best like direction for the school. So like that's where the trust comes in. But I don't know.	1. opportunities for people to feel heard and valued **(BR)** 2. my voice is heard and valued. I also have to trust that like, those people are making decisions that are best for the overall school - **(SCL)**	1.C, T 2. I	Community - student opportunity to succeed and having a voice to be heard and value are key foundational values according to Faculty #3 to build trusting relationships in a school culture. Especially coming from leadership, which should have the student's best interest for the overall school **(A)**.
Interview Q #5: Can you tell me what a vision of a strong community looks like at PRHS? Yeah, I think a strong community has to be rooted in shared language1. Whatever that's our values, whether that's our mission like our general Why for the school has to be the same. And then like, I think when we have like our general, why, and the reasons why we're all working at this school and a part of this community, like voluntarily a part of the community, we need to figure out like what sort of like diversity among us is there because yes,	1. Shared language **(TC)** 2. shared values and the shared belief system - **(BR)** 3. our own diversity of life experiences that makes us who we are. **(BR)**	1.I, C 2. C,T 3. C,T, I	Community - Shared language should be a key element of team and community Identity - Faculty #3 describes a community from different backgrounds and experiences coming together for a shared purpose and Why **(IC)**

we have like the shared values and the shared belief system, but the beauty of community is like a bunch of different people that are coming together for similar cause2. So like let's root ourselves in something that's the same and all of our decisions as a community are based in those ideas, but we're all coming from it with our own experiences, our own like gifts and values and not values, same values, but like our, our own diversity of life experiences that makes us who we are. So like how, how are we representing those voices in this shared mission? Because, I mean, I think like those are the parts of the community that I've, I've taken the most from is not people that are the same as me, but people that, you know, bring in different perspectives and, and show who they are in that community3. I learned more about why I'm connected to what I do when I learned that.			Sense of belonging
Interview Q #6: Can you tell me how your own story impacts the school community at PRHS? Hmm. I mean, hopefully I can tell you how I, hopefully how I hope it impact [redacted] [redacted], I don't, I don't actually know how it does. I mean, I also, I. I'd love feedback on that, but I mean, I hope that like when I think of leadership within our team, like, I, I hope it comes across that I value people taking risks and pushing themselves1. Because I think that that's like how you grow the most. I hope people learn that like they're not in it by, themselves and I think like something at least we talk about in counseling is that a lot of times we're dealing with like very heavy topics and we care a lot for our students and when things aren't going well, like it's, it's really hard2. So I mean, I, I hope that people will have learned that, you know, you don't have to be the only ones that hold those situations, that like we are a community and we give each other like the leeway to kind of tap out at different times and other teammates kind of carry on.And like I've had the model that at times where things are super difficult and I feel like I'm not being effective and knowing those limits is important. And then knowing that there's a lot of other people that will seamlessly jump in and take my spot is like that's community to me3. And then knowing that I'm going to do that for someone else at some point I think it's important, but yeah, I think it's like being honest with who you are and what you can offer and then kind of where you fall short and where you need to grow and move forward and like continually building that trust together4. That's what I hope I offer, but who knows, who knows how it actually rolls out?	1. people taking risks and pushing themselves - **(GM)** 2. they're not in it by, themselves **(BR)** 3. other people that will seamlessly jump in and take my spot - **(TC)** 4. where you fall short and where you need to grow and move forward	1.T 2. C,T 3. C	Faculty #3 describes a hope for a **(A)** community that takes risks and pushes limits. A community who supports one another that knows when to tap out and there will be someone to tap in for you. But also being honest with who you are and where you fall short in order to grow Hope - core value

Appendix I: Values Statement



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